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PRESENT CONDITION
AND
PROSPECTS
OF
THE GREEK CHURCH.

THE
PRESENT CONDITION
AND
PROSPECTS
OF THE
GREEK, OR ORIENTAL, CHURCH;

WITH SOME
LETTERS WRITTEN FROM THE CONVENT
OF THE STROPHADES.

BY THE REV. GEORGE WADDINGTON,
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ERRATA.

Page	Line	
33.	13.	<i>for division of churches, read division of the churches.</i>
47.	5.	<i>for beginning of the seventeenth century, read end of the sixteenth century.</i>
48.	5.	<i>for rather than the doctrines, read as well as the doctrines.</i>
60.	18.	<i>for of, read and.</i>
82.	11.	<i>after impossible, read or impolitie.</i>
94.	1, 2.	<i>for its sister, Russia, read the church of Russia.</i>

THE
GREEK CHURCH.

CHAPTER I.

THE political independence of Greece, or of the greater portion of Greece, which appears at length to be permanently secured, will probably satisfy the speculations and the hopes of the mere politician; he will perceive in its establishment the immediate liberation of an intelligent people from the oppression of a foreign government, from the sufferings and degradation of slavery; and he will foresee in its action and development the advance of civilization and knowledge, the rich rewards of commercial activity, the splendour of national prosperity.

And this is indeed a splendid prospect, on which no generous mind will dwell with indifference; and we cannot doubt that the measures which are tending to realize it, to whatsoever objections of momentary inexpediency they may have been liable, will be the subject of more ardent applause with every race of our posterity, than any political

achievement of this age. For, though the judgment and feelings of statesmen may sometimes be subdued by fears of instant evil, or hope of present advantage, it is certain that history, in her noble office of retribution, neither measures the grandeur of events by the limits of the scene on which they pass, nor is so blinded by considerations of international justice, as to overlook the natural and universal claims of humanity.

But, however important the blessings which will immediately result to Greece from political regeneration, and which may set at rest the anxiety of her ordinary friends, there are still some who are more deeply interested in her destinies, as well from the peculiar affection which they bear to herself, as from their general solicitude for the improvement and welfare of man. There are some who value her restoration to liberty, only as the means of reviving virtues which are extinct, or creating those which have not hitherto existed; and who truly consider the proper end and object of every exertion in her favour, to be her absolute moral reformation.

The great necessity of such reformation is not now disputed, even by her most partial advocates; but as these are generally disposed to expect it as the obvious and instant result of national independence, they dismiss all thought and care respecting an event of such seeming certainty.

But, in truth, the circumstances which connect the moral improvements of a nation with changes in its political constitution, are neither so simple in their kind, nor so easy and rapid in their action, as some are disposed to imagine; and though, in the sudden casting off of slavery, many foul and inherent spots and stains may fall away with it, much time, and the co-operation of many instruments, are requisite before any general alteration can be wrought in the nature and internal constitution of the body.

The application of these instruments must, in each case, be regulated by the character of the people, and the description of the vices to be contended with; and the more frequently and seriously we meditate on the means most efficacious for the moral regeneration of Greece, the less does it seem possible to separate that consummation from the hope of her *religious* reformation. For the habits of the Greeks are, in many respects, so peculiarly interwoven with their faith and their superstitions, that if in all countries the dependence of morality on religion be sufficiently evident, that connexion is perhaps nowhere so close and so necessary as in Greece.

And, certainly, the most superficial observer of Greek character must have noticed, among its most prominent features, a strong sense of religious duty, and of the submission due to a higher order of

beings. That this natural inclination to piety has been misdirected to objects unworthy, and converted by successive corruptions into a passion for ceremonies and frivolous superstitions, leads us to lament, indeed, that such excellent energies have been abused so sinfully, but not to doubt their force, or to despair of their future application to nobler purposes. For it has ever appeared to me, that that ardent and obstinate adherence to the duties imposed by his priest, and mistaken for his religion, which supports the Greek through his severe fasts and rigid observances, would acquire additional strength and constancy, by the substitution of purer rules of obedience, derived from the sincerity of truth. And assuredly the spirit, which is so easily kindled by every vulgar superstition, would burn more clearly and brightly by the application of a holier flame.

These are some of the considerations which have led me to investigate the real nature of the religion now professed by the Christians of the East, and the extent of the corruptions which have grown over it; for if it be probable (as I am disposed sincerely to believe) that the recent change in their political condition will finally lead to a more perfect regeneration, I trust that it is not an unprofitable employment, so to examine their errors as to point out also the foundation of their hopes. And it may happen, that the general and candid discussion both of the

one and of the other, will contribute in some degree to bring about the result we pray for.

But to those who shall not admit that probability—who think it fanciful to expect a change in national religion, from a change of national government, and perceive no connexion between these in their corruptions or renovation—I am unable to suggest any prospect for Greece; except the most gloomy and most fearful; in the despair of religious reformation, I can foresee no other alternative than general Infidelity. For we are not so blind as to imagine that an active and curious people, starting from absolute ignorance into the brightness of sudden civilization, and exulting in the vanity of intellectual licence, will continue, even for one generation, implicitly to believe, or obsequiously to follow, the legends and practices of their forefathers. And when we reflect on the absolute apostasy which has been introduced into some Roman Catholic countries, even by the gradual development of thought and knowledge; we cannot contemplate, without deep apprehension, the consequences which may follow, where the political change has been so violent both in nature and circumstance, and where the religion is, in many respects not less corrupted than the other: while the mixture of levity and impatience, which peculiarly marks the Greek character, must prepare us for the

probability of a rapid transition from the extreme of credulity to that of unbelief.

For my own part, I am not slightly impressed with this apprehension; nor does it appear that the danger can otherwise be obviated, than by an early and efficient reform in the Church of Greece. Respecting the extent, and means of such reform—by what principles it ought mainly to be directed, to what objects addressed, by what limits restricted, (questions of no common delicacy and difficulty,) we shall be able to speak more confidently after some enquiry into the actual condition of that Church.

But if there be any Christian whom these considerations shall fail to interest, I fear that it will be vain to urge upon him any motives of a more general and less practical nature. And yet, surely, there must be many among us, who would think it sinful to approach, with thoughts untouched by pious emotion, those hallowed regions which nourished the infancy of Christianity; for, whatsoever light of pleasing enchantment may be thrown upon their antique features by the conquests of human genius, by the memory of glorious achievement, by the hope of proud regeneration, our deepest affections, our most grateful and enduring recollections, must at length repose and fix themselves in the combats and triumphs of that re-

light, by which the individual existence of every one of us is every moment affected, by which all our actions and all our prospects are influenced. And therefore should we not be careless to acknowledge the various ties which attach us to the earliest home of Christianity; nor may we coldly overlook the religious condition of those who have transmitted to us that blessing. For if it be something that they handled skilfully the pen and the chisel, that they reasoned ingeniously, that they speculated elegantly, that they described faithfully,—it is of much nearer concernment to us, that they comprehended the unrefined simplicity of the Gospel, that they lived by its precepts, that they perished for its truth; that they guarded the sacred deposit under every circumstance of oppression; and then sent it forth to the corners of the world, as a possession for every race and every age of man.

There is still another consideration, which we should never lose sight of during the progress of such inquiries; not contented with a cold and barren assent to its truth, but ever gathering from it the rich and glowing fruits of charity and Christian benevolence. It is this—in tracing the line which separates us from any church or sect of fellow-Christians, we perceive that, though they deviate in some certain tenet, in ceremony, in government, from the path which we find reason to follow, they are bound and united to us by the thousand

moral connexions and relations of the Gospel. Our differences are usually on matters of obscure investigation, or uncertain importance; our agreement is on all that is obvious to our understanding, and on all, perhaps, that is necessary for our conduct. Our differences are few, and easily numbered and accounted for; our agreements are as numerous as the precepts of our religion, as our affections, as our hopes, as our duties. The basis of our union, the substance and essence of our concord, extends, without limit, through every act, and thought, and feature of life; through all our interests, through all our passions; everywhere pervading the social system, and filling it with universal charity.

CHAPTER II.

FROM the narrow limits of regenerate Greece, which have merited the tribute of our first attention, and will continue to claim our principal notice, we shall now advance into that extensive field assigned to our researches, which is bounded on the north by the boundaries of the Russian empire, and by the extreme hills of Abyssinia on the south. It is true that the continuity of this province of Christ's kingdom is interrupted by the vast, but thinly-peopled tracts which spread their barrenness from Egypt to Sennaar; but of the rich and populous countries which lie between those distant extremities, some are exclusively, and all are partially, inhabited by Christians.

The great majority of oriental Christians remain attached to the orthodox church—for besides the Walachians, Moldavians, Servians, and Greeks properly so called, there are very many thousands who, under that name, and professing that faith, are scattered through Bulgaria and the broad extent of Roumelia, Albania, and Asia Minor; and they are even mixed, though in much smaller numbers, with the heretics of Syria, Assyria, and Egypt. These heretics are divided by the Greek theologians into

four descriptions, * the Armenians, Copts, Maronites, and Nestonians. The two first are accused of attachment to the errors of the Monophysites; and this, though it may in some degree be true of both, applies more strictly to the Copts than to the Armenians; but the real truth is probably this, that not one among the people, and a very small proportion of the priesthood of either nation, have any knowledge of the nature of the dispute, or any decided opinion on the subject. They are aware, indeed, that, for some reason or other, they do not acknowledge as their head the Patriarch of Constantinople, but govern their own church after their own fashion; and, contenting themselves with this visible and intelligible distinction, they are little curious about the speculative differences which may have produced it. And it is equally certain, now that the ardour of controversy is extinguished, that the orthodox church is less deeply scandalized by their heresy than by their schism.

The Maronites are Syrians, chiefly inhabitants

* I have adopted the division of Cyril Lucar, given in his thirteenth Letter, as published by Aymon (*Monumens Authentiques de la Religion des Grecs, &c.*, p. 148.) The Patriarch has expressed his abhorrence of these misguided persons rather more warmly than became his usual moderation and humanity; and therefore I will not omit the mention of a singular error into which he has himself fallen, in confounding the Jacobites with the Nestonians. These are his words: "*Jacobitica est vilissima et spurcissima natio, neque de illa est quod aliquid scribatur nisi quod ob hæresin suam Nestorianam nos latere non debeat, &c.*" p. 159.

of Mount Libanus, and profess the Roman Catholic faith. It is not certain how far they comprehend or how closely they embrace the doctrine of Rome, but it is known that they publicly admit the supremacy of the Pope and the forms of his government; and it is believed that their fidelity is occasionally encouraged by the remittance of considerable sums of money. Some remains of the Nestorians are found in Chaldea, Mesopotamia, Persia, &c., and these are still said to form the most respectable portion of oriental Christians.

Of these four classes of heretics, the Armenians alone require any further notice. They are governed by their patriarchs, one of whom resides on the island of Aghtamar, and is held little friendly to the church. Besides these, a titular patriarch is resident at Constantinople. The universal aggressions of Rome have had rather more success in Armenia than in Greece, for not only does the doctrine of transubstantiation* appear to be established by the church, but to the monastic

* *Ricini*, p. 474. This author distinctly asserts that the Armenians have *not* fallen into the heresy of Eutyches. The number and importance of the *latinised* portion of that people is sufficiently attested by the savage persecutions to which they were recently subjected by the Porte. Families were dispersed, and non-conforming husbands and parents driven into distant and perpetual exile, by a government which has, assuredly, no claims on the sympathy of any civilized nation, whatsoever transient admiration may be wrung from us by the ferocious heavery of its subjects.

orders of St. Gregory and St. Basil, that of St. Dominic has been added. In other respects, I can observe little difference between the parent and the schismatic, except in as far as the latter is more rigid in her fasts and more melancholy in her festivals; and even somewhat more frivolous in her ceremonies, and more degraded in her superstition.

Of the various nations and tribes professing the orthodox faith it will be proper to examine the actual moral condition, before we proceed to ascertain the tenets of their church; because every inquiry of this kind should have some view, however remote, to practical utility; and as the moral system of every people is more or less connected with the nature of their religion and the manner of its administration, we shall learn, perhaps, in this case, how far the corruptions in the oriental character and worship have influenced each other, and how far any remedies applied to the one might be effectual in improving the other.

That we may not waste our time and energy by wandering over uncertain ground, we will, at present, restrict our remarks to the Principalities of Walachia and Moldavia, and to the republic of Greece; because, respecting Servia, I cannot speak with the confidence of personal observation, and because the inhabitants of the capitals, Constantinople and Smyrna, are not fair specimens of the general population; and also because to all these countries,

to the Principalities as well as to Greece, the gates of civilization appear at length to have been thrown open, so that the practical application of our remarks may not be altogether hopeless.

I think it impossible to find two adjacent countries which present to the traveller so strong and so instructive a contrast as Transylvania and Walachia. Nature has been equally prodigal to both, or has even lavished her favours more bountifully on the broad open plains of the latter: they are intersected by innumerable rivulets, and throw out herbs, and wild plants, and shrubs in rank luxuriance; but they bear few traces of the hand of man, and even the few they bear are indicative of his degradation. Transylvania is inhabited by the same race of people, professing, for the most part, the same religion; and there the fields and vineyards are carefully cultivated, and the produce is abundant and cheap; and facility of communication is secured by excellent roads and regular conveyances. And what is of more importance, as it proves that the lower classes participate in the increasing prosperity, new and decent cottages are rising in every quarter, and the dress and countenance of the peasant betoken a condition not bordering upon want. Such is the appearance of Austrian Walachia, that of a young and vigorous country rapidly advancing to maturity. A narrow rivulet is crossed, and you enter, by a road rising directly up the

mountain's side, the Walachia of Turkey. Cultivation nearly ceases: a little Turkish wheat and a few straggling vines on the hill sides; rich and extensive plains scarcely tracked by any road; rare and dismal cottages disfigured by filth and misery, and a population whose face and rags bespeak the extremities of poverty and oppression: such are the features of this province, and such the objects which attend you almost to the gates of the capital.

Bucharest* is a very extensive place, containing a varying population, of which the average may be 50 or 60,000; and as it consists almost entirely of large misshapen palaces and wretched huts, it presents a very faithful picture of the political condition of the people: for, as if their government, which is a despotism within a despotism, did not occasion a sufficiency of misery, the cup is filled up by the avarice of a stupid and ignorant nobility; † to these the offices of state are generally sold, and made profitable by oppression.

A large proportion of the landed property (I was assured a third) belongs to the Church, and

* Before the confusion introduced by the Greek revolution, the population of Bucharest was estimated at 80,000.

† They are called Boyars, a privileged class, and subject to no taxation, so that the revenues, which are farmed, are extorted immediately from the lower orders. This enrichment of the rich out of the poverty of the poor seemed (in 1823) to be progressive, for I observed several new palaces in a state of progress; but not one symptom or hope of improvement for the mass of the people.

from this quarter, at least, some charity might have been expected; but I was unable to observe that the dependents or neighbours of the monasteries were in a condition at all better than that of their squalid brethren, and the contrast between their cabins and those spacious and well constructed buildings, as it proved how little they profited by the wealth even of their religious instructors, seemed to set the seal of friendlessness upon their misery. And so it is that in appearance the Walachians bear no resemblance to any other Christian people; but they have many striking points of similarity with the Fellahs of Egypt, the most degraded of all Mahometans. The complexion and costume (when there is any) are not very different; and in the manner and physiognomy of both is equally expressed that easy habit of obedience and acquiescence almost natural in hereditary slavery, which seems incompatible with any hope or memory of a better condition, and to which the Greeks were never reduced, even in the bitterest moments of oppression.

It is not possible, nor is it desirable, that a nation so constituted and so governed should be populous. A country consisting of more square acres than the whole of ancient Hellas, and of far more rich and cultivable soil, does not contain (as far as I could learn with any certainty) half a million of souls. Whatever has been said of Walachia is

equally true of the sister province Moldavia, except that the capital of the latter is smaller, and the country more thinly peopled. Their united inhabitants cannot exceed a million; and it is no exaggeration to assert that, with such vast natural resources, under a wise and vigorous government, that number might be quadrupled in less than one century.

It is right to observe, that in the neighbouring province of Bulgaria, inhabited partly by Mahometans and partly by Christians, and under the *immediate* government of the Porte, the land is much better cultivated, the villages more decent, and the people more agricultural and more numerous.

The moral condition of the Walachians is described to be such as their political degradation would lead us to apprehend. In the capital, the corruption of manners is said to be universal, and the insignificance or entire want of a middling class makes this very credible. And if, on the other hand, it be true, (as I have heard it frequently asserted,) that capital offences are of rare occurrence, we may very probably attribute this forbearance to that absolute enervation which is occasioned by habitual slavery, which destroys, with every other energy, even the courage to be greatly criminal.

Their religion is that of the Greek church, containing such errors and imperfections as will pre-

sently be described. But it would be as absurd, on the one hand, to attribute the moral debasement of this people entirely to defects in their religious system, as it would be erroneous, on the other, to deny the connexion of those defects with that debasement. Whatever purity of faith they might originally have possessed, it was not possible that they could long have endured so aggravated a despotism, without great deterioration of character, and the corruption of their character, by a necessary reaction, would have affixed some stains to their religion; not perhaps by affecting the orthodoxy of their tenets, or working any alteration on points chiefly speculative, for these are matters which, however important in themselves, are very faintly and indirectly influenced by the moral condition of those who profess them; but by increasing priestly authority beyond its just limits, and creating the long list of superstitious ceremonies which are necessary to support it. Again, a religion which has thus suffered by the national degradation fails not, in its turn, to discover new facilities of corruption, and to infuse new poison into the wounds from which its own stains may have been originally communicated. And thus, as in descending to the present degree of wretchedness, the moral and religious systems have mutually exerted on each other a pernicious efficacy, so we need not doubt that any permanent improvement in the former must be

attended, if it be not preceded, by a practical reformation in the latter.

But in those unhappy countries of which we are speaking, no such change can be attempted or hoped for, until they shall have passed from the dominion of the Turk for ever: here is the origin of the evil, and this the source of their disgrace, their sufferings and depopulation, which will endure and increase, without hope or chance of remedy, until the moment of an entire emancipation from the Mahometan government. Statesmen who regulate the exchange and transfer of provinces may, perhaps, deem it of trifling importance to the inhabitants under which of the civilized governments of Europe they may happen to be placed; but ere they restore a Christian state to the sceptre of the Sultan, should they not pause for one moment to inquire to what condition of existence they are about to consign it? Should they not pause to recollect, that the rule of the Porte, however inconstant in severity and capricious in indulgence to its Mahometan subjects, has at no time visited its *Christian* rajahs with any other feelings than those of suspicion and hatred—or with any other treatment than such as attests the intensity of those feelings? And in truth, on the assumption of their natural and necessary hostility to the government, they have been ever and everywhere plundered and outraged, not more from individual avarice or inso-

lence, than from the deliberate conviction, that their prosperity must be dangerous to the empire. There is no probability that this policy can ever change, for the Turk is not ignorant that any relaxation of rigour would be attributed to no better motive than weakness, and would increase the power of those whom it relieved, without securing their fidelity or gratitude.

With this afflicting prospect before us, ought we not to express an ardent hope, that no political circumstances may make it necessary to offer up the Principalities once more to Turkish rapacity? To whatsoever destiny that rich and extensive country, fertilized by nature for the maintenance of a numerous and flourishing population—to whatsoever government that Christian people may finally be consigned, we will indulge the confident expectation that, at least, it will never be restored to *that* power under whose sway it has weltered, like a corpse, for so many centuries, and whose interest and whose object it must ever be to augment and perpetuate its misery.

In returning to the republic of Greece, I must allow that neither the virtues nor the vices of its inhabitants would ever have excited such warmth of attention, had they not both been faithfully transmitted from antiquity. Distorted or exaggerated by the broad and turbid meridian through which they have passed, they are, in substance and

nature, unchanged, and may possibly not be susceptible of change—as the magnificent country, in which they seem indigenious, after being subjected in its various fortunes to the extreme of human care and cultivation, the extreme of devastation and neglect, retains the same splendid outlines of its mountain tops, its islands, its peaks, and its promontories, unaltered and unalterable. But as in ancient days, political circumstances were such as to bring forward and illustrate the loftier features of character, throwing a partial shade over its defects, so, in later times, the perverse hand of slavery has forced into light whatever therein is humble and barren and misshapen, and hung a cloud over the heights and eminences of its virtue. But the cloud at length has burst, and the long-concealed pinnacles begin to unfold and develope their proportions.

In estimating the age of nations, we should reckon not by years but generations—so slow is the usual progress of improvement and reform; but if it be true that, in the education of a nation, as in that of an individual, “*memory* must be exercised before the powers of reason and fancy can be expanded,” the first step has already been taken by a people, who for so many centuries had their best consolation for present miseries in the recollection of former glory—and who may find among their own ancestors the models they require for them-

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for some

selves and their posterity. The great natural talents with which the Greeks seem almost singularly to be endowed, will accelerate their advance in the path of civilization; and as they acquire more knowledge, they will probably acquire more wisdom also.

And yet their very native fertility and aptness to profit by the slightest cultivation creates in us some anxiety lest their intellectual progress should precede that moral improvement of which they stand so greatly in need, and of which they possess not, perhaps, the same natural capabilities; though, in this respect, I am disposed to draw a broad distinction between the higher and the lower orders.

In the lower orders, we may certainly discover all the vices of slavery heightened or modified by the peculiarities of the character on which they grow—frequently stimulated into restless activity, seldom degraded into abject prostration, and betraying an energy even in their wildest excesses, which is susceptible of better direction under happier circumstances. There exists, however, a numerous class of Greeks who are exempt from any general charge of demoralization. The agricultural part of the population, those with whom travellers are usually least acquainted, are certainly as free from vicious habits as any existing peasantry. Ignorant indeed, and uneducated, they possess not those active virtues which are commonly attributed

to the Swiss and other mountaineers of the west; but it is some merit to have come forth from so long a bondage unseared by any deep impression of the fetter. The Greek possesses in this respect a vast superiority over his brother-slave the Walachian, which may be attributed partly to the greater energy and elasticity of his character, and partly to the fact that a greater proportion of the population is employed in agriculture; but chiefly to the milder degree of oppression to which he was subject under the direct government of the Turk, than that more complicated torture which exhausted the Walachian.

To the higher classes of the Greeks,—to the inhabitants of the large towns, and to those engaged in maritime and commercial matters, the charges usually preferred against the national character are more generally applicable. To these may be attributed most of the deliberate crimes which have disgraced the revolution. The piratical excesses which led to such enormities of guilt could never have reached their vast extent or audacity without the connivance and even the direct support of many of the leading men in the republic. And accordingly it is no secret in the East, that some have permanently profited by the licence which seemed for the moment to be permitted to all, and are still reveling in the spoils of their allies and protectors. Indeed the truth of this charge is alone sufficiently

proved by the facility with which piracy was suppressed *by the Greeks themselves*, the moment it became the interest of the government to suppress it.

Admitting that the revolution has produced a few splendid exceptions of disinterested integrity, I believe the corruption which prevails among the higher orders to be very general, and that *there is the source of the national demoralization of which we hear so much.* The difficulties which even now are found to oppose the formation of an efficient government originate entirely there; and there must commence, and spread itself widely and deeply, that great moral reformation, without which Greece can never secure herself any place among civilized nations.

We shall return to this subject with more confidence after our inquiry into the Religion of Greece, and its probable influence on the minds of the people. And in this question we must be careful not to measure our hopes of future excellence by the limits of our imperfect experience. For in truth, since the primitive ages of the Church, it does not appear that Christianity has at any period possessed a free scope and liberty of action upon the character of that people. For during the earlier centuries of our religion it was tortured and deformed by metaphysical disputes, the creations of oriental fanaticism or scholastic subtlety. These

were succeeded by violent dissensions respecting the degrees of practical superstition which it was politic to impose upon the people. And then, after some languid centuries of domestic imbecility, the power of the Mahometan prevailed, and, by enslaving the Church, debased still further the religion, of Greece.

A new prospect is now open to that afflicted country, and a nobler prospect than has yet been traced in any volume of her history. If she was republican in the days of her glory, in those same days of moral turpitude she was pagan also; and during the long period of her Christianity, she has been at every time destitute of political rights, and sometimes even of national existence. Now she is a free and Christian republic—she possesses the government most peculiarly adapted to her spirit, to her soil, to her resources—she possesses the religion, which, if she justly value and rightly employ it, will give stability to her happiness, and uprightness and dignity to her character. The present is the crisis of her destiny, and on the impulse given to her present energies will greatly depend, whether she sink by vice and irreligion into utter contempt and national insignificance, or whether she so array herself in modern and Christian excellence, as to surpass and far outshine the liveliest brilliancy of her own antiquity.

FAR removed from any intention of giving this work a character at all political, I cannot still refrain from making a few additional remarks on the actual prospects of Walachia and Moldavia. Their final restitution to Turkish protection, I hesitate not to say, would be foolish if it were not wicked; and impolitic if it were not inhuman also. The inhumanity of such a project (could I believe it to exist) is attested by the long-protracted sufferings which have afflicted the past, and which would thus be perpetuated through the future, existence of a country, capable of wealth, and public happiness, and political importance. For the great natural resources of that country, as they give security to its hope of populousness and prosperity under a good government, so they plead with irresistible force against its restoration to a debasing and depopulating despotism. It is absolutely necessary that such considerations as these should have weight in the regulation of human affairs; it is necessary that those to whom the destinies of nations are entrusted, should be guided by some *general* regard for the happiness of man, so far, at least, as not to sacrifice, to any trifling circumstance of momentary convenience, or distant and uncertain contingency, the obvious and perpetual interests of any people upon earth. The greatest statesmen of former days, those who live in our affections, as well as in

our admiration, and thus possess the only description of fame which can satisfy the ambition of any generous mind, were men who *sometimes* looked farther than the seeming advantage of the moment, and placed their policy in the exercise of their virtue, and found their own best interests in the welfare of others. And the statesmen of this age, second to none of their ancestors in talent and integrity, have much stronger reason to be assured that they will most substantially consult their country's final advantage, as well as their own future glory, by availing themselves of every occasion to enlarge the limits of civilization, and to extend the blessings of social happiness and Christian government.

But, besides these considerations, which some perhaps will think vague and unmeaning, there are others of a particular nature which will be intelligible to every statesman. I assume that the Turkish European empire is not devoted to extirpation; that the frightful project of destroying or expatriating six or seven millions, whether of slaves or of infidels, has been abandoned, as too monstrous for serious deliberation. Besides which, it is necessary for the security of Europe, that some power should for the present interpose between Russia and Greece. And if the final expulsion of the Turk be indeed destined to some future generation, it is for the obvious interest of all, that a Greek and not

a Russian government should be established in its place ; for then, perhaps, with such extent of territory and abundance of natural resources, the Greek empire might have little reason to dread the contact of Russia. But, at present, as no such event can be reasonably expected, it is the undoubted policy of Europe to maintain the integrity of the empire, which is, properly speaking, Turkish. In this compass I mean to include all those provinces, *and those only*, wherein the great majority of the inhabitants is Mahometan ; for those which are not so (to omit all mention of their own misery), contribute very little to the actual strength of the empire. Now, it will not be disputed that to give any *lasting* security to Turkey, there is no other method than to diminish her grounds of quarrel and collision with Russia ; and I leave it to politicians to answer, whether a very large proportion of these has not ever been occasioned by the right of interference possessed by Russia, in the affairs of the Christian subjects of the Porte ? Now, it is obvious that, on the one side, the absolute independence of Greece will remove much of this fuel of discord ; and that, on the other, the object would be completed by the final and entire alienation of Wallachia and Moldavia from Turkey. These provinces have long languished under Turkish protection, subject to certain conditions with Russia ; and the real or supposed violation of these conditions has

furnished, and would ever furnish, abundant causes or pretexts for dissension between the two principals; and these means of irritation cannot otherwise be cut away than by confining all Turkish interest and influence to the south of the Danube.

The next question is more difficult:—To whom shall the preservation of these helpless provinces be transferred? To Russia?—They will profit by the change of despotism; they will gain some little in national independence and character; something, perhaps, in civilization; something, certainly, in moral and religious improvement; and Europe will gain in tranquillity by any change which in any way disentangles or dissevers Russian and Turkish interests. But after all, pretexts of quarrel are easily found when they are ardently desired, neighbourhood increases the facility of strife, and the Danube would still prove an insufficient barrier to the ambition of the stronger.

I can imagine one arrangement only which prevents any hopes permanently to secure the independence of Turkey and the peace of Europe, and the difficulties which seem opposed to its accomplishment shall not prevent me from calling attention to it: I would propose to consign the principalities to the protection of Austria.

It is scarcely necessary to point out the advantages which this measure would confer both on the provinces themselves and on the body of Europe:

for it is now generally admitted, that the internal government of the tramontane dominions of Austria is mild and benevolent, and tending to their gradual improvement and permanent prosperity. And there can be no reason why the same wise policy should not be extended to Walachia and Moldavia. But a greater object than this would be obtained by the security which would durably be given to the repose of Europe, by the interposition of Austrian territory between Russia and Turkey. For by these means not only all pretexts of quarrel derived both from that territory itself, and from the contiguity of the two empires, would be abolished, but their very power of mutual invasion subjected to the intervention of a third.

I am not so blind as to imagine that the might and ambition of Russia could be constrained by this, or any other possible arrangement, to perpetual tranquillity; but I think *that* would be a mighty benefit both to this and to future ages which should obstruct and dam up the present channel of her waters, and divert them into the wastes and desolation of Asia. Overwhelming Europe, they would inundate, but never fertilize; but if we turn them eastward, and distribute them over barrenness and barbarism, we shall at the same time avert all danger and inquietude from ourselves, and open the best human prospect of the civilization and conversion of the East. And as to the

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Russia

European provinces of Turkey, we need not doubt that in the long process of time and accident they will yield to the successive encroachments of that enterprising people, who are now once more a nation, and who will advance in power as they increase in virtue, and whose hopes and whose efforts will finally be satisfied by the restoration of the Greek empire.

The sum of what I have said is this—It is an object of vast importance to ourselves and our posterity, of great consideration to Europe, and I think to Asia also, that the weight of the Russian empire should be brought to press upon Asia, not upon Europe; for its influence in the one case may be beneficial, in the other it must be injurious. To this end it is conducive, perhaps necessary, to obstruct her communication with European Turkey; this cannot otherwise be effected than by the interposition of Austria. Nor can this interposition be otherwise brought about, than by transferring Walachia and Moldavia to Austrian protection.

The means to produce this desirable result are doubtless to be found in the resources of diplomacy.

CHAPTER III.

On the Doctrines of the Church.

I. THE doctrine of the Trinity is maintained by the Greek church as it was originally established by the two first General Councils; and thus it differs both from the Latin and the Reformed Churches, respecting the manner of the procession of the Holy Spirit. The Greeks maintain it to be from the Father only, and rest the truth of their opinion chiefly on its antiquity; and such proof, though it can have little weight with us, is of conclusive authority against Roman Catholics. This seems, indeed, to have been the point on which the Greek deputies, at the Council of Florence, made their best stand; and with such success, that they were even allowed to retain the words "by the Son;" but this forbearance, on the part of their adversary, was attended by the condition, that they should interpret them in the same sense in which the Latins understood "*from the Son.*"

However, on their return to Greece, they found it difficult to impose this absurdity on their communion, or to endure the shame of having themselves admitted it. The creed remained unaltered,

and the words were permitted to keep their natural meaning, and do so to this day. In the year 1648, Leo Allatius, a Roman Catholic Greek, again endeavoured *, with much unsuccessful sophistry, to establish the equivalence of the two expressions. In the course of his work, and in confirmation of his argument, he quotes some Greek authors, who admit "that it was on no solid or rational ground that the two Churches had been so long at war with each other." And on this point we are very well disposed to agree, both with them and with him. Willingly do we admit that the difference in question is indeed most insufficient ground for animosity and dissension; and if, instead of insulting our common sense by an attempt to disprove its existence, he had shown that it affects no social principle, that it interferes with none of our Christian duties, that it touches, in no respect, the exercise of benevolence and charity, that it contains no rational cause of individual dislike or distrust, he would have done more honour to his own name, and to the faith which he professed and advocated. But such principles were in no esteem, when the object proposed was the external union of the two churches; for to this end it had advanced little, to prove the differences † trivial and unimportant. It

* In his famous Treatise, *De perpetuo Ecclesie Occidentalis atque Orientalis tam in dogmate quam in ritibus consensu.*

† I speak of differences in doctrine.

was to be shown, at any expense of reason, and sense, and truth, that they existed not at all ; and when all distinctions had thus been smoothed away, it would have remained to the Greek to surmount only one other necessary obstacle to the embrace of her Roman sister,—the acknowledgment of the Pope's supremacy.

A controversy between consecrated prejudice and scholastic sophistry could hope for no termination ; and thus at length it became the means to produce that celebrated Schism, which would have possessed much less real importance in the history of man, if the division of churches had not involved the discord of nations, and excited to mutual malice and violence the misdirected children of Christ. And, even to this day, though the fury of the controversy has long since passed away, the passions which it disturbed are scarcely yet composed, but still toss and beat, and murmur along the shores of the East.

II. On the subject of Redemption, the doctrines of the Greek Church appear to differ little or nothing from our own*. Christ is called the Regenerator of our fallen nature,—“ One single offence had degraded the human race ; one single expiation was necessary to redeem it ; the act of Redemption was effected in the person of Jesus Christ.” And

* Stourdzs, p. 54. *Considérations sur la doctrine et l'esprit de l'église orthodoxe.* 1816.

then, from the act of Redemption, the truth is derived, that man cannot regenerate himself by his own power ; and that he requires, for that purpose, the co-operation of divine Grace, with the efforts of his own will : as the earth is not fertilized either by the labour of man, or by the dews of heaven only, but by the consenting influence of both.

Again, when the Greeks make mention of Justification by Faith, they mean that active and vital faith which comprehends in its effects, if not in its essence and definition, the discharge of every social and moral duty.

They admit the efficacy of sincere repentance, but they abhor and disclaim the corruptions which have flowed from this source, and censure the invention and sale of Indulgences, in language which might become the zeal of the most ardent Protestant.

Here let us pause for one moment ; and, removing our eyes from the single difference, let us observe how vast a field of union is comprehended in these few sentences. And, in earnest truth, if the only end of religion be our eternal salvation, where there is perfect agreement as to the means by which that end is attainable, can there exist any difference worthy to be called *religious* ? There is variety in the interpretation of mysteries, in sacraments and ordinances, in the ceremonies and discipline of the Church ; in every thing which man

his understanding with. Then comes from
Council of Florence na - Stourdzja

has superadded to the structure of God. But, certainly, we cannot err when we believe that a mighty principle of concord pervades the hearts of all men who seek their salvation rightly. And if no remedy has yet been devised to heal the divisions of Churches, it is a serious consolation to us to reflect, that on the souls of their individual members God has thus deeply engraven the eternal "Henoticon" of Faith, whereby he binds together the vast universal family of those who truly believe, and who faithfully serve him.

III. Respecting the State of the Dead, the Greek Church has a very essential difference from that of Rome, which all the sophistry of the latter has been unable to explain away. For as it lays no claim to any knowledge of unearthly things, beyond that derived from Scripture and apostolical tradition as embodied in the Seven General Councils, its pious humility, and its veneration of antiquity, are alike shocked by the modern introduction of Purgatory. From the earliest ages up to this moment *, the orthodox members of the Greek Church have ever held two separate places of existence for the souls of the departed, places of ex-

* Stourdzja, Chap. III. Leo Allatius de Purgatorio, c. 34. I prefer to take from an adversary the account of the opinions which the Greeks brought with them to the Council of Florence in 1439, and which, in spite of some equivocations, they carried away, as the result proves, perfectly unaltered.

pectancy, until the resurrection of the body and the final judgment, not eternal abodes—they have held that the souls of the wicked are confined in regions of darkness, and discomfort, and sorrow, apart from the light and glory of heaven—that the saints enjoy a certain degree of beatitude, which will then be perfected and consummated, when their bodies shall finally be restored to them. But though they allow the probability of different mansions (*στάσεις*) in Gehenna, they disclaim all belief in a third and intermediate habitation. And when the nature and circumstances of this third abode are discovered to them by the penetration of the Latin Church, when the purging fire is depicted to them, and they are told that living man has power over its agency and duration, they reject at once what they consider an impious fable.

On the other hand, it is not doubted that among the individual members of that communion there have been varieties of opinion respecting a matter of which all were equally ignorant, and on which the Church itself professes not infallibility. The argument which has been brought to prove its inconsistency (it can prove no more) is the use of prayers for the dead—for to say that the souls already condemned to Gehenna can be assisted by the supplications of the living, is it not to assume that they exist there in a state of *purification*; and that this act may be facilitated, if not by fire indeed, at

least by human intervention *? The pious expressions of Stourdza † may serve to answer this objection.

“ We pray for the dead, because the act of prayer is the respiration of the soul, the secret of the divinity, and the only method of approach to it. We pray for the dead, because we stand as pledges one for the other: because we believe the infinity of God's mercies, without wishing to fathom their depths. But we admit no place of purgatory, because that dogma has not been taught us; because all human speculations are vain to discover the ways of Divine Wisdom, &c.”

In truth, to pray for the souls of our departed friends is the most natural and pardonable error of piety; and though it be dangerous and improper to inculcate as a church doctrine the efficacy of such prayers, it would neither be right to discourage their private and individual effusion, nor easy to disprove the possibility of their acceptance.

There is one other point, which seems to have given some trouble to the Council of Florence, and which the Latin writers of the seventh century have taken much pains to illustrate. The Greeks did not believe in the immediate admission even of

* In fact, the “Anatolian Confession” admits thus much, and seems satisfied to deny the fire and the separate locality of purgatory; but of this Confession we shall say more hereafter.

† Ch. iii. p. 69.

saints and martyrs to the beatific vision. The Latins maintained the contrary opinion, with the confidence of absolute certainty; and on this point, certainly the latter have at least the merit of greater consistency—for as both Churches agree in soliciting by prayer the mediation of those blessed persons, it seems natural to infer that they are already in the presence of the Being with whom they are called upon to intercede. But such blemishes (if they be really so) in the uniformity of the Greek faith, prove nothing more than that that Church has not been diligent to erect specious tenets on foundations of little security; that it has not studied to present a show of unanimity on matters where none can really exist, but rather has left some licence to individual opinion, where certainty does not seem attainable.

On reviewing what has been written, we perceive that the doctrinal differences of the three Churches are not numerous; and that those especially which subsist between the Greeks and ourselves, are not of a nature which can ever disturb our religious concord. In the first place, they differ with us and with the Latins equally, on the manner of the holy procession—on a mystery almost impenetrable to human investigation, they maintain the original doctrine of the Œcumenic Church; in this the Latins thought proper, in a later age, to make an alteration, which we find to be scriptural. From this

innovation: some violent dissensions have already flowed, troubling the superstitious age which nourished them. But the retrospect of such calamities as have passed like a storm over the face of society, and can never more return, does not otherwise affect us, than as it moves the astonishment of some, and the sorrow and compassion of all.

In comparing the other points of difference, we observe the gradations by which Christianity has been corrupted, and we see, too, how far the Roman has outstepped the distrustful timidity of the Greek. The latter assigns some not very definite residence to departed souls; he offers prayers for the forgiveness of the sinful, in hope, rather than in confidence, that they will be accepted. He supplicates the intercession of the Saints, without daring to pronounce that they have themselves attained the perfection of the blessings intended for them. But the Roman has no such hesitation or scruple: exalting the saints and martyrs to the immediate presence of the Trinity, and dismissing to instant punishment the unrepentant sinner, he besides asserts the existence of a third abode, and a third condition of the departed; he is even acquainted with its nature; he has certain knowledge of the element of purification, and is master of the means to control it. Without at present entering into the reasons of this greater arrogance on the part of the Latin Church, it may be sufficient

again to observe, that in the matters here briefly treated, the Greeks appear to be placed about half way between the Latins and ourselves; that the points on which we are divided are not those of fundamental importance; and that, though they may be more than sufficient to prevent the union of the Churches, they present no principle to impede the harmony and friendship of virtuous men, or to chill us in the discharge of the Christian duties which we owe to each other.

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CHAPTER IV.

On the Sacraments of the Greek Church.

THE Greek agrees with the Latin Church in the reception of the Seven Mysteries, or Sacraments. Four of these, Baptism, the Eucharist, the Imposition of hands in Ordination, and Penance; it considers as having been "practically instituted" by Christ himself. The other three (Marriage, Chrism, or Confirmation, and Extreme Unction) it derives from the words of the Testament and the use of the primitive Church. Greek writers continue to involve the explanations of them in a cloud of impenetrable mysteries, so as to satisfy, by the same course of argument, their belief in the doctrines of Christianity; their principles regarding the mystical union of the visible and invisible world, and their antique veneration for the number Seven*.

On three only of the mysteries will it be neces-

* Stourdza, liv. ii. ch. i. There have been abundant disputes in the Church respecting the number and nature of the mysteries. Cyril Lucar reduced them to two: others maintained that two only were of great importance, the others were the lesser mysteries. Some have distinguished two, others three, and others four, as practically instituted by our Saviour. The word mystery is defined—"a ceremony or act appointed by God, in which God giveth or signifieth to us his grace."

sary to bestow much attention; Baptism, the Eucharist, and Penance. The celebration of Marriage, indeed, is attended by many more formalities in the Greek than in other Churches; and we may add, that in the south at least the knot is more easily dissoluble. This circumstance we are disposed to attribute partly to the general poverty of the Greek priests, who fail not to profit by such dissolutions; and partly to the baneful influence of Mahometan example. The sacraments of Ordination and Unction differ little, either in principle or manner of celebration, from the corresponding sacraments in the Roman Church.

I. Baptism is still administered in the East by trine immersion. The Greeks set great value on the strict observance of that ceremony, and warmly maintain their orthodoxy against the innovations of the Latin Church, by pleading the example of our Saviour himself, the very meaning of the word baptism, which implies * immersion, and the consent of that original and genuine Catholic Church, which they assert to be perpetuated in their own. And assuredly, were antiquity the true measure of orthodoxy, their claim would be perfectly well founded; nor is this nearly the only ground on which Papists are obliged to throw aside their favourite weapon, in the contest with their ancient

* See Stourdzza, p. 87; and Dr. King on "Rites and Ceremonies of the Greek Church in Russia," p. 192.

adversary. But in this instance, at least, they have been provided with a much keener substitute by the substantial aid of reason; and when, in former ages, they cast away one of the earthly fetters which impeded the free progress of a religion intended for every race of man, in every climate, they received the applause and imitation of the wise in every age.

Children are baptized * on the eighth day, and the sacrament of Confirmation, by the holy Chrism or Baptismal Ointment, follows at a very short interval that of Baptism. And on this point, too, the Latins have much more reason, when they defer that sacrament till a later age, though it be in further contempt of antiquity.

Respecting the nature of the Eucharist, it is undoubtedly true that there is at present little, if any, difference between the professed orthodox belief of the Greek and Latin Churches; but in the manner of its celebration, the Greeks, in obedience both to ancient, apostolical practice, and the obvious command of Scripture, continue to communicate under both forms.

* The administration is attended by some foolish and superstitious ceremonies, the relics of former religions; as that of the *σφράγις*, or sealing of the infant, before baptism; and the dispossessing of the Evil Spirit, (the personification, I suppose, of Original Sin,) who is believed to dwell in the child until the priest has blown upon it three times.

The Georgians, who, in other respects, follow the Greek faith, do not baptize their children till they have attained the eighth year.

“The dogma of the Real Presence under the transformed elements of bread and wine,” is distinctly proclaimed by Stourdza * as that of his Church, with some expression of astonishment that any doubt can exist respecting its truth. The words of the Oriental Confession are even more explicit: “When the priest consecrates the elements (gifts), the very substance of the bread and of the wine is transformed into the substance of the true body and blood of Christ †.”

In the Communion Service according to the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom, which is universally in use, the ceremony is called an oblation or sacrifice, and the following is shortly the process of administration. After the Catechumens, if any be present, have been dismissed, the elements are carried round the Church, on the head of the deacon, before consecration. Presently the priest prays God to make the bread and wine the precious body and blood of Christ:—first for each element separately, and then for both united; then after some intervening

* P. 91. In the oath taken by every Russian bishop at his consecration, he affirms that “he believes and understands that the transubstantiation of the body and blood of Christ in the holy Supper, as taught by the eastern and ancient Russian doctors, is effected by the influence and operation of the Holy Ghost, when the bishop or priest invokes God the Father in these words—‘And make this bread the precious body of thy Christ.’”—Dr. King, p. 12.

† Ὅπου ἡ ἱερεὺς ἀγιαζοῦ τὰ δῶρα, ἡ αὐτὴ οὐσία τοῦ ἄρτου καὶ ἡ οὐσία τοῦ οἴνου μεταβάλλονται εἰς τὴν οὐσίαν τοῦ ἀληθινοῦ σώματος καὶ αἵματος τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

prayers, he invokes the gift of the Holy Ghost: and lastly, after another similar interval, he addresses Jesus Christ our God, "who sittest on the right hand of the Father, and yet art invisibly present with us here below; vouchsafe by thy mighty hand to impart to us thy most immaculate body, and thy most precious blood, and by our hands to all the people." The Sacrament is then administered first to the deacon, and then to the congregation; and we may add that the prayer made by the deacon on the receiving the Sacrament, contains these words: "I believe that this is thy most pure body indeed, and that this is thy holy blood indeed." I have taken this account from the Liturgy in use in the Russian Church, as translated by Dr. King in his very faithful description of that Church; and thus is clearly proved its unqualified assent to the doctrine of transubstantiation. But I have many doubts whether this doctrine be understood with equal definitiveness and precision in Greece. Both Churches, indeed, profess the Liturgy of St. Chrysostom; but this has undergone some alterations in either, and these in some respect different, since the independence of the Church of Russia. I find in Ricaut* (who wrote in 1678) a quotation from that Creed, as used in Greece, which differs materially from the corresponding passage in Dr. King's trans-

* Note i. p. 185.

lation of the Russian, and certainly does not breathe any taint of transubstantiation. At any rate the practical influence of the dogma has gained no ground in the East, and the same degree of superstitious veneration is not there offered to the Host, as under the Roman Church. When this sacrament is carried to the sick, the priests do not prostrate themselves before it, nor do they expose it publicly to be adored, unless in the very act of administration; nor do they carry it in procession, nor have they instituted any particular feast in honour of it. These circumstances, as they prove to us the comparative modesty with which this tenet* is inculcated in Greece, do they not also dispose us to suspect its antiquity? Is it probable that so few abuses and absurdities should have grown out of a soil so fruitful, among a people enamoured of marvels and miracles, if it had really existed there during the earlier ages of Christianity? The question respecting the original belief of the Greek Church, on this point, has given rise to abundant discussions, and exercised especially the ingenuity and diligence of the seventeenth century. We will not interrupt and cloud this brief account of existing opinions, by the details of a disingenuous and inconclusive controversy; but it is proper, even in this place, to trace the outline of those events which

* Ricaut, p. 162.

I have endeavoured elsewhere to describe more diligently*.

Cyrillus Lucar, afterwards Patriarch of Constantinople, extended his travels in the west, during the beginning of the seventeenth century, beyond the limits usual to Greeks, the Universities of Italy and France, and applied an unprejudiced mind to observe and comprehend the systems of the Reformed Churches. He discovered much that was worthy, and, as he thought, susceptible of imitation; and some years afterwards he published † at Constantinople, a "Confession of Faith," agreeing, in the most material points, with the doctrines of those churches. It does not appear that the Confession of Cyrillus met, during his lifetime, with any opposition from his own communion. It may have contained some points which had hitherto escaped the ordeal of distinct definition, but it exacted nothing that revolted the fixed opinions of his correligionists. It was even the opinion of Ricaut (fifty years afterwards), that those whose education was purely in the Greek literature; instructed and taught in their own monasteries, did not much deviate from its tenets, on the subject, at least, of transubstantiation. But the emissaries of

* In Part II. I have thrown such light as I have been able to collect on this obscure, but important portion of ecclesiastical history.

† About the year 1630.

the Roman Church allowed not such an approximation between its rival and its adversaries; a persecution, at the head of which was the French ambassador at Constantinople, was set on foot against the person rather than the doctrines of Cyrillus, to which he fell a victim in 1688. His successor, Cyrillus of Berea, a person devoted to the Pope, also suffered a violent death not long afterwards; and though the hope of effecting the union of the Churches, which Rome had permitted herself to revive, appears to have been finally extinguished by this event, still she did not relax her efforts to produce an assimilation of doctrines.

In Russia, the bishop of Kioff in the Ukraine, Peter Mogilas, published a Confession, in 1643, containing transubstantiation and other Latin doctrines; and it received, before its publication, the revisal and approval of the four Patriarchs. The Confession, we learn from Dr. King, was in little repute when he wrote (in 1772); possibly it was never generally received beyond the limits of Russia; but the doctrine which it was probably the first to promulgate to the Church, has survived, and may long survive it. In the mean time, the disputes on the same subjects which were dividing the west of Europe, disturbed the religious apathy of Greece. For it had become a question between the disciples of Claude and Arnaud, whether the oriental doctrine of the Eucharist agreed with that

of the Reformed or of the Latin Church. To ascertain this point with necessary accuracy, it was determined that the ambassador of France and his Jesuits on the one hand, and the ambassadors of Holland and England on the other, should endeavour to obtain, for their respective opinions, the signatures of the Greek clergy. The clergy divided, as they were directed by their belief or their interests* ; but the large majority assented to the propositions of the Jesuits. Not very long afterwards, a synod was assembled at Jerusalem, by Dositheus the Patriarch, and the Anatolian Confession, which still professes to contain the tenets of the Greek Church, was compiled and published in 1672.

On the subject of the Eucharist, this Confession contains the passage already quoted, though, perhaps, somewhat modified by a subsequent expression, "who gives his flesh, and this blood, for food and drink to the faithful †, *under the covering* of bread and wine," whereby the opinion of a perfect transubstantiation seems to be discouraged. However, there is no doubt that the doctrine of transubstantiation was that intended to be promulgated ; and the passages to that effect, in the Russian liturgy, were probably introduced at that time. That such was the case is distinctly asserted by Dr. King, who even re-

* See Mosheim, Cent. 17.

† *ὁραῖα καὶ τὸ ἕνδυμα τοῦ ἁγίου καὶ τοῦ οἴνου.*—Ric. p. 106.

marks on the little ingenuity with which the interpolation was made. And it is perfectly clear that if the service above quoted had existed in its present form during the disputes between Claude and Arnaud, the Liturgy would have furnished a much more decisive object of appeal than the individual opinions of all the priesthood of Greece; for could any two of the clergy have possibly differed as to the sense of words so perfectly explicit? It may be added, that the very word *μετουσίωσις*; transubstantiation, is not to be found in the earlier writings of the church, and may be proved to be of recent introduction. From these facts, not intending at all to dispute the present general acceptance of the doctrine in question, I infer, however, with great confidence, that it was not a doctrine of the early church, and that it was never distinctly embodied and defined and enforced as an essential tenet upon the Greek communion, until the middle of the seventeenth century. It is not here denied, that, from the first ages of Christianity, there have existed very elevated notions of the nature of the holy elements; that the most ardent expressions have been used to exalt their sanctity; and that some have supposed a sacramental change to be wrought in them by their consecration. And there may have been individuals in every age and country, whose private belief has extended that change to the utmost limits of transubstantiation.

But no such tenet was ever inculcated by the church, until the Jesuits infected its atmosphere with the taint of Rome.

In the celebration of the Eucharist, the Greek still agrees with the Reformed Churches in the use of leavened bread, and in distributing the cup to the laity. As to the former point, though considered of no material import, it has still the merit of having introduced into its ceremonies one corruption less than its Latin rival; respecting the latter, the Christians of the East are not less offended than ourselves by the groundless innovation of Rome.*

III. The ambition of the early Church involved the acts of Penitence and Absolution in the sanctity of a mystery, that no duty of religion might be performed except by the intervention of its ministers, and that their spiritual influence might be extended over deeds and thoughts the most private and the most sacred: for to absolution they annexed Auricular Confession, on the pretext that "the priest cannot absolve unless he know what sins are to be remitted." This rite is not less in use and in honour in the Eastern than in the Roman Church; there are some who account it "the

* And yet even among them a slight distinction is introduced in the manner of communicating between the clergy and the laity. The latter receive both the elements together, the bread being sopped in the cup—the former receive them separate.

sole axle on which the globe of ecclesiastical polity turns;" and it is admitted, that without that support the whole fabric of spiritual power must fall to ruin. Stourdza calls it "an usage destined to bruise the arrogance of man without disturbing social order;" but though, indeed, we may agree with him in regarding it as a melancholy triumph over human pride and dignity, it is in vain that he strives to convince us of the extreme moderation with which it is celebrated in the Greek Church. It may be true, indeed, that the sale of indulgences and other enormities have at no period been practised in the East; but a power which is too mighty to be wielded by man will not be more temperately exerted, because those to whom it is intrusted are deeply sunk in ignorance; and the very value which it has acquired, as the engine of ecclesiastical authority, is sufficient to prove its abuse.

The order of this sacrament in the Greek Church is solemn and imposing. After a prayer to "the God of Penitents," and another to Jesus Christ, who has delegated to his priesthood the power "to bind and loose," the priest turns to the penitent, and addresses him in the words * :—

* "Ὁρα, ἄγγελε Κυρίου παριστάται λαβεῖν τὴν ὁμολογίαν σου ἰα σόματί σου, καὶ βλάσῃ μὴ σιγῆς τὸ ἁμάρτημα αἰσχύνῃς ἵνα καὶ ἔτι πάγῳ ἀνθρώποις εἴμι ἁμαρτωλὸς ὡς καὶ σύ.—See Ricaut, p. 265. The corresponding words used in the Russian church are here again

“ Behold the angel of the Lord standeth by to receive thy confession from thy mouth; and see that thou conceal not any sin through shame; for I too am a man and a sinner like thyself.” He is then interrogated respecting the ten commandments in succession, as to any violations of them which he may have committed, and finally receives his admonition and absolution.

A distinction has been drawn by Dr. Covell, and applauded by Dr. King*, between the spirit of the Greek and Roman Churches in the celebration of this sacrament. In the former, they say, the confession is addressed to God himself, or to his angel, who is present—in the latter, directly to the priest; and hence it is inferred that a much keener zeal and thirst for sacerdotal authority has ever distinguished the latter communion. The conclu-

different from the Greek, though bearing nearly the same import: they are as follows: “ Behold, my child, Christ is invisibly present to receive thy confession; be not ashamed therefore or afraid, and conceal nothing from me; but without equivocation tell me whatsoever thou hast done, that thou mayest receive forgiveness from our Lord Jesus Christ. Behold his image before us; I am only a witness to testify before him whatsoever thou shalt say unto me; but if thou concealest anything from me, thou shalt have double sin. Attend, therefore, since thou art come for the medicine, that thou goest not away unhealed.”—Dr. King, p. 227.

* Page 224. If, when he speaks of “ the ancient Greek church,” Dr. C. intends to allude to an original practice of immediate confession to God, we have only to lament the corruption which hath long consumed such wholesome piety. But it is unfair to contrast the virtue that is dead in the one church with the vital evil which pollutes the other.

sion is undoubted; the distinction whence they derive it is vain and fanciful. The same power of absolution, founded on the same principle, and defended by the same text, is claimed by either church. Its exercise in either is a mystery or sacrament. The penitent is interrogated by the priest with equal rigour in the one and in the other. The end and effect are essentially the same; and as to the means by which the torture is applied, I am rather disposed to consider the Greek system as more perfect; for what fiction can we conceive so effectual to extort from the trembling culprit the deepest secrets of his heart as the presence of the messenger of Omniscience?

On referring to the material points of doctrine or practice mentioned in this Chapter, we find that the Greek bears a greater affinity to the Latin than to the reformed churches. In the number and importance of the sacraments, in the distinguishing tenet of transubstantiation, and, above all, in the use and necessity of auricular confession, there exists not any difference between them. The Greeks retain the practice of trine immersion in baptism, and interpose no interval between that ceremony and confirmation. On the other hand, they communicate under both kinds, and disclaim the visible abuses which have flowed from the sacrament of penitence.

CHAPTER V.

On the Rites, Ceremonies, and Superstitions of the Greek Church.

IN a faith wherein the necessity of internal contrition and private prayer is little inculcated; in which spiritual perfections are not highly regarded, except through their outward demonstration, rites and ceremonies, which form with all classes the practice of religion, supply to the vulgar the place of its substance. Such is the character which has been deeply and necessarily impressed on the religion of the East, since its ministers have succeeded in constituting themselves the only mediators between God and man, the only mean through which the creature can communicate with the Creator. It is to this end that the designs of an ambitious priesthood have ever tended—to interpose between the thirsty penitent and the Fountain of forgiveness, and to distribute its waters through such channels as lead most directly to their own interests; and perhaps we may add, that to their success in this object the extent of their authority has generally been proportioned. But in deploring this perversion of the noblest means to the basest

purposes, we find it some consolation to observe that this authority has sometimes been exerted for useful and even pious purposes; that private virtues have sometimes been nourished even by the abuse of religion; that religion itself has been promoted or sustained through the very usurpations of its ministers. The truth of this remark is singularly illustrated by the persevering fidelity of Greece; for when I have reflected frequently and with ardent admiration on the constancy with which its inhabitants have maintained their religion unviolated, through a long and most deadly persecution, among the human causes which have wrought so God-like an example of faithful endurance, I have been disposed to assign the foremost place to the influence of the priesthood. And the probability of this opinion is not shaken by consideration of the means by which that influence was originally acquired, and which were possibly the only means whereby, in the depth of political and moral degradation which succeeded the Turkish conquest, it could have been upheld at all: such as the institution of frivolous ceremonies and gaudy devices of superstition; the diverting the attention of the people from the substance of their faith to its vain but attractive appendages; the appointment of offices in which the body had much part, but the soul no interest; the belief that the Throne of Grace has no access save

through the ministers of grace ; in short, the entire corruption of the native homeliness and integrity of Christianity.

If we were to examine in detail all the outward institutions of the Greek Church, we should find them to differ little in principle from the corresponding ceremonies of the Papists. The varieties in practice arise partly from local circumstances, partly from the greater poverty of the Greeks, and their stricter adhesion to ancient custom.

I. From their fasts and their feasts the Greeks receive what little knowledge is permitted to them of the real and fabulous history of their religion. The fasts are numerous, and observed with extreme rigour. Besides the Catholic Lent, there is a second lasting from Whitsuntide to St. Peter's day ; a third from the 3rd to the 15th of August, in honour of the Assumption ; and a fourth during the forty days preceding Christmas. In the monasteries, a fifth is added, to commemorate the exaltation of the Holy Cross, which occupies the first fourteen days of September. During all these fasts, excepting that before Christmas, the strictest abstinence, even to the exclusion of most sorts of fish, is enjoined and very generally practised. Again, as every day in the year acknowledges the patronage of some saint, so those are very numerous which claim extraordinary celebration ; and on these occasions the Greeks fail not to make compensation for extreme temper-

ance by the opposite licence. Thus their life is passed in an alternation of extravagancies, and the priest who enforces the one excess does not much care to repress the other. Little removed from the condition of puerile subjection, they break wildly forth when the festive season invites them, and return at its conclusion to their stated tasks of mortification and discipline. Their feasts partake, however, of a religious nature, and the saint of the day is particularly invoked to intercede with God for the forgiveness of his true worshippers; for such is the limit affixed to the adoration of saints by the church. But the people, lively, ignorant, and superstitious, perceive not the ecclesiastical distinction; and the beings whom *they* adore have power of themselves, as well to punish or pardon transgression, as to inflict or avert the earthquake and the tempest; to poison or purify the dews of evening; to nourish the olive-tree with fresh fountains and breezes, or to blast it with untimely sterility.

II. It is unnecessary to remind my readers of the broad distinction, drawn by the Greek church, between statues and pictures, as objects (or means) of adoration. The former it holds in abhorrence, and anathematizes all who bow down to them; while it consecrates the latter with incense and burning tapers, and bowings and crossings, and all the acts and instruments of superstition: "For

great (they say) is the difference between idols and representations; for idols are figures of man's invention, as the Apostle testifies. We know that an idol is nothing in the world. 1 Cor. viii. 4. But the picture is an adumbration of some true transaction, which hath its existence in the world; as the picture of our Saviour Christ, and of the holy Virgin Mary, and of all the Saints," &c. &c.* But in the weakness of their reasonings on this matter, they make their great appeal to the indisputable authority of the seventh General Council, and on this they rest their orthodoxy. Still, that they have some misgivings as to the propriety, or consistency, of this practice, is shewn by another distinction, much insisted on both in Greece and Russia †; they will tolerate no pictures except such as are rude and graceless, and devoid of all animation and expression of life. Unless, indeed, this seeming perversity be rather caused by observing, that the relief which a figure may receive in an

* Μεγάλη διαφορά εἶναι ἀναμῖσα τῶν εἰδώλων καὶ τῶν εἰκόνων, διατι τὰ εἰδῶλα εἶναι πλάσματα καὶ ἔργα τῶν ἀνθρώπων, καθὼς μαρτυρεῖ λίγων ἡ Ἀπόστολος, εἶδαι δὲ οὐδὲν εἶδῶλον ἐν κόσμῳ—Μὰ ἡ εἰκὼν εἶναι παρὰ τὴν ἐκείνην πραγματικὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἐπεὶ ἔχει τὴν ὑπαρξίν του εἰς τὸν κόσμον, ὡς ἡ εἰκὼν τοῦ Σωτῆρος ἡμῶν, &c. Ricaut. Chap. 1. 17.

† This proves that the taste for detestable pictures which prevails among the Greeks, is not, as some think, a sort of compromise with their Mahometan masters, whose impartial hatred of every description of representations leads them most to hate those which are most faithful.

exquisite painting, will frequently carry with it much of the effect of sculpture.

As to the worship of these uninviting figures, we are told, of course, that they are not the objects of prayer, but only the means to awake recollection or kindle devotion; and in proof of this it is further asserted, that the Greek is much less fruitful than the Latin church, in records of miracles performed by them. But, for my own part, admitting the truth of this assertion, I must still confess that, when I have beheld the peasant or the shepherd from Parnes or Hymettus kneeling before the picture of the Holy Virgin, when I have observed the relaxation of his swarthy features, and the earnestness of his attitude and countenance, I have found it hard to repress the belief, that he is, in fact, animated by the very same hopes and faith, in respect to the graceless figure towards which his eyes and prayers are directed, as were wont to inflame the piety of his pagan ancestor when he worshipped before the statue of Minerva. In every age and religion which has permitted honour to be paid to images, there has never been any variance in the doctrine of the learned, nor any diversity in the practice and feelings of the vulgar.

III. The use of tapers and torches, under the sunshine of a Grecian sky, is excused as a pious commemoration of the sufferings of the primitive Christians; when they nourished their proscribed

religion in subterraneous cells and obscure caverns, unvisited by the light of day. And this reason may have sufficed for the perpetuation of an innocent absurdity, which will oppose no serious resistance to the progress of reformation.

IV. The Sign of the Cross is as much in use among Oriental Christians as in any Roman Catholic country, and is executed with at least equal rapidity and confidence in its virtues. The cross itself is addressed in frequent and solemn prayer, and honoured with the epithets and attributes of the Divinity. M. de Stourdza justifies this exceeding veneration by some pages of most silly mysticism, calculated for the understanding of a Cossack, and the learning of a monk of Mount Athos; and which, in this age and country, would deserve no notice; if it did not exhibit to us the manner in which an enlightened member of the Eastern church can still endure to reason*.

* *Note*, p. 56. " La croix est un représentant de la structure humaine; elle semble uniquement faite pour l'homme, et ce genre de supplice caractérise symboliquement toute sa misère et sa grandeur. " Debout, dominant de son front ce qui l'environne, les bras étendus comme pour embrasser cet espace immense dont il semble être le roi; les pieds fixés à cette vallée de larmes, la tête couronnée d'épines, emblèmes des soucis rongeurs qui l'accompagnent jusque dans la tombe, *voilà l'homme*, ecce homo, voilà l'adorable attitude de l'homme-dieu sur la terre... Plus on médite, plus on se persuade que ce n'est que par le supplice de la croix que Jésus Christ pouvait caractériser en soi toutes les mi-

It is far from my intention to conduct the reader through a minute description of the successive ceremonies of this church; an intention which would, in fact, be best accomplished by transcription from the valuable works of Dr. King and others, who have been diligent in such details. Many of these ceremonies are connected with the administration of the Sacraments, and would more properly belong to our last chapter. Others are independent of the body of the liturgy, and partake even more abundantly of the nature of superstition: such as the benediction of the loaves—an office, perhaps, commemorative of the primitive Agapæ; the benediction of the waters, which is performed with great religious and military parade on the ice, at St. Petersburg, in the depth of winter, in celebration of Christ's baptism; or, the office of the "Divine and Holy Lavipedium," corresponding in origin, though yielding in splendour, to the similar ceremony of the Roman church. Moreover, the Orientals appear to indulge, even to a greater extent

sères et les transgressions humaines, les expier, les racheter toutes, représenter collectivement le genre humain, comme un seul être," &c.—Again, at p. 77. "C'est par la divine croix que s'opère perpétuellement ce miracle: signe de foi, d'amour et d'espérance, ce trophée de la mort est en même tems le sanctuaire de la vie que notre pensée reclame au nom du médiateur éternel. Emblème de la force combinée à la résistance et remise en harmonie, la croix a racheté le passé; elle a confondu la justice et la miséricorde; elle seule nous dévoilera l'avenir."

than their Latin rivals, their passion for long and pompous processions, which characterized in a certain degree the antiquity of both. To arrest the ravages of a pestilence, or to compose the agitations of an earthquake, or to allay the danger of unseasonable drought, persons of every class, in every isle or valley of Greece, proceed in lengthened order, winding along the mountain side to some gloomy grotto of the Virgin, or St. George, or St. Spiridion, in devout confidence. That vows, by such imposing solemnities enforced, will not be offered up in vain. And it has not unfrequently happened, that the operation of nature, by its spontaneous coincidence with the effusion of such vows, has confirmed the baseless faith from which they proceeded. Besides these occasional solemnities, ordinary processions are common in every part of Greece, in honour of martyrs or saints, or the relics of saints; but the Holy Virgin, in spite of the little commendation she derives from pictural representation, is everywhere the favourite object of devotion; and (if I mistake not) it is to celebrate her majesty, and deserve her protection, that the monks of Thessaly ascend, in annual procession, to the top of Olympus, and perpetuate the sanctity of that spot by song and worship.

V. The services of the Greek Church are exceedingly long and tedious; that most so, and also the most ancient, is that of St. Basil, which is believed

to have been composed about A.D. 370; but it is not now used except on the Sundays in Lent, and perhaps on or two other occasions. It is superseded by that of St. Chrysostom, which has undergone, from time to time, a variety of alterations, as anything may have been altered, or innovated, or more distinctly defined in the doctrines of the Church. But by the word Liturgy the Greeks understand only the Communion Service, and as to the rest, it varies every day in the year, and every part of the day*; so the whole body of the services is sufficient to fill twenty folio volumes, besides one other similar volume, which is occupied by directions for the use of the rest. To the study of these books the learning and ability of the priest are usually confined; not with any view to comprehend the spiritual import of their contents, but simply to acquire some facility in the art of adjusting to each day its peculiar form of prayer; and this is said to be a matter of so great difficulty, that few ever succeed in perfectly attaining it. In Russia, the service is performed in Slavonian, a language now little spoken; and to the Greeks it is delivered in Hellenic, and is, therefore, for the most part, unintelligible to them.

This last circumstance would be of more importance, if the greater portion of it were not so exe-

* See Dr. King, p. 41.

cuted as to be nearly, or entirely, inaudible to the congregation; for it is read in a low and hurried and indistinct voice, and a great part of it directed to the east, in which it is not intended that they should have any share. The origin of this practice, to us so offensive, is, of course, to be traced to the establishment of the mediatory character in the priesthood, as if their office were rather to pray for the people than with them. Thus we are not surprised to find, that one of the most ancient appellations of Christian ministers in the East, was *mesoitai*, mediators. The name, indeed, they appear at present to have resigned, but they will long continue to cling to a character so closely connected with their authority. Besides the reproach of indistinctness and rapidity of utterance made almost necessary by the length of the services, the manner in which I have seen them performed is frequently indecent and impious. I have been present on occasions when the very semblance, not of devotion only, but even of dignity and gravity, has been thrown aside by the ministers; and the wafer, which is ever received with the most profound piety, is sometimes administered with a smile. But, strange as it may at first appear, this insulting indifference in the priest seems not at all to affect the religious feelings of the common people—doubtless, because those feelings are not founded on any sound principle, nor at all closely interwoven with

morality, or with the deficiencies of society—because reverence for the church and its ministers stands so near to the bottom of faith, that a question touching the propriety of their conduct might seem to imply a doubt respecting the very essence and mysteries of religion itself.

This absence of devotion in the performance of the service is not compensated by any other description of religious instruction, for such we can hardly call the recital of the life* of some saint which usually follows the Liturgy. This practice has been naturally preserved, as the most direct method of exciting the attention and zeal of a credulous and impassioned people; indeed, it forms a very consistent part of a system addressing itself not at all to the reason of men, but wholly to their imagination or their senses; for to the ignorant mind a more immediate and vivid impression is conveyed by the violent narration of exaggerated acts or sufferings, than by any eloquence of precept or persuasion. But the consequences of this method of inspiring religious feeling have been the

* The "Tablet of the United Worthies" (*Πίναξ τῶν Συναγαγίων*) contains three hundred and sixty-five of these lives, and satisfies the annual demand for marvellous falsehoods. Such is the spiritual nourishment most generally administered. Homilies on subjects of morality, as well as faith, have been occasionally delivered by those at the head of the Church, from the earliest age down, at least, to that of Cyril Lucar; but such instructions have never reached the body of the people.

overthrow of every thing that is rational in piety, and the introduction of whatever is most degrading in superstition. For, as the miraculous stories with which these lives abound, are not more earnestly inculcated by the priest than they are greedily devoured by the vulgar, so the habit of receiving, with unsuspecting confidences, the wildest fables of other days, begets in these an eager disposition to believe the present occurrence of events so familiar to their credulity. The audacity of the priesthood is animated by the spiritual prostration of the people, and they fail not seasonably to satisfy the craving which they have excited by very gross and impudent impostures.

There is one class of superstitious practices prevalent in every part of Greece, to which we need not do more than make allusion, because few or none of them originate in any corruption of Christianity. The charm, the magical incantation, the votive and propitiatory offering, the *φίλτρα* and the *φάρμακα*, and similar usages, have descended, like the statues and temples, as the remnants and memorials of antiquity. How far the priesthood may have found it useful to encourage them, I know not; but they have not the credit of their invention. But it may be useful to conclude this Chapter by one or two instances of those monstrous impostures which I have mentioned, which even exceed the corresponding absurdities of the Roman

Church ; and I shall do so the more readily, because one such description is more effectual in representing the religious debasement of a people, than many vague expressions of reproach or compassion.

The miraculous exhibition which I shall first describe, is here represented, as I never happened myself to witness it, on the authority of Ricaut, and for the most part in his excellent language. It will appear to some to be of a nature so purely ludicrous, as scarcely to have any claim on our serious attention. But there are those who find something sad in every spectacle of human degradation, and whose sadness is augmented and darkened when that degradation is exhibited in the dress of religion. And it is to such persons that the following description is addressed.

The Greeks have divers chapels dedicated to St. George, amongst which, at an obscure village, called by the Turks Boschivi, not far from Magnesia, there is one, where, on the 23d of April, they carry his picture in procession, accompanied by multitudes of Turks as well as Greeks, who resort thither, the first for pastime, the other for mirth, company, and devotion. The picture is about the size of a sign, "which we hang before a shop, and has about equal merit of execution. This picture, (they report and many believe it, especially the women,) when carried by a sinner, is endowed with so much of the champion's courage, as severely to

beat and chastise the back and shoulders of the bearer; but it is more civil and mild to the innocent, or to the less scandalous in the wickedness of life. I had once (says Rieaut) the curiosity to see this exhibition: one of the papases took up the Champion on his shoulder, accompanied by two others of the like size; with these all the company marched in procession with much quietness and gravity, until they came under a large plane tree, where were the ruins of an old chapel dedicated to this saint. Mass being here celebrated, the priests, returning to their habiliments, left the pictures to be carried home by the laity, when one, more forward than the rest, with fear and reverence, took the Champion on his shoulder, which at first began a little to move and turn itself, but at length came to downright blows and beat the bearer to the earth. He was relieved by another, also a sinner, and then the other two pictures began the like rage, buffeting and beating those that carried them, with great tumult and confusion. This ridiculous piece of superstition pleased the humour of the Greeks, and scandalized the enemies of our faith; which, when I saw, I wondered at it, and blamed the remissness of the bishop, in presence of the priests who managed the solemnity of the day. I asked one of them in private, whether they believed that the pictures were inspired with life and motion to beat sinners; to which, making some pause, as unwilling

to impose on one whom he guessed difficult to give credence to such matters, he answered that it was a thing doubtful and hard to be believed by any others than the vulgar sort. And on other occasions, discoursing with the prelates of this church on the same subject, I seemed to be concerned and transported with some little passion, that, in the sight of Turks and infidels, they should give countenance to so great a cheat, to the dishonour of our holy faith and gospel, which is supported on better foundation than on such idle and profane imaginations; to which they gave this answer, 'that custom had prevailed, and that for some ages this belief had taken so deep a root in the minds of the ignorant, that it was hard to undeceive them without dishonour to the saint, and danger to the whole fabric of the Christian religion. For this belief being equally fixed with the doctrines of necessary faith, the confutation of this one would bring the others into question, and perhaps persuade the people that they were parting with the main principles of the gospel.' "

Certainly, the most tedious and irritating of all conflicts, is that which is waged by a more enlightened posterity against prejudices which have been inculcated by the folly or the iniquity of their ancestors; and the difficulty of the contest is much increased, when the prejudices are of a religious nature. But time and moderation, and perseve-

rance will triumph even over these; and in this instance they will be aided by the natural intelligence of a people impatient to throw off the weight and reproach of ignorance.

Another and more notorious display of superstition, which I propose to describe, leads us to the mention of Jerusalem; and it may seem a strange circumstance and full of sorrowful reflection, that we should arrive, through the corruptions which dishonour our faith, at the earliest mention of its birth-place. And, indeed, it would truly appear to any one contemplating the present condition of Palestine, that it has been selected as a perpetual scene of the temporal retribution of Providence. In every feature of that desolate country, we read awful records of God's justice: like an afflicted and unrepentant sinner, it presents a sullen and scathed brow, expressing the eternal alliance between guilt and misery. And if in vain imagination we cast our regards over the blasted wilderness in pursuit of any memorial of what is pure and wholesome in the religion of Christ; if we would trace his holy footsteps and search for precious emblems of his actions and perfections, nowhere can we discover any monument of his beneficence and heavenly charity, of the blessings which he conferred, of the joy which he communicated by his power and his presence—No—but at every footstep we meet some object which recalls to us his passion and his agony;

his blood and his cross are every where forced on our recollection ; and the joy and the ardour which have hurried us to the birth-place of our Saviour are quenched in the melancholy pilgrimage to his sepulchre.

Whoever has chanced to pass, like myself, the Easter week at Jerusalem, has doubtless made the same reflections, as he has beheld the same sad spectacle of madness and impiety. Scarcely a day passes during that festival undistinguished by some scandalous scene of fanaticism. But I shall here confine my description to the miracle of the Holy Fire, which I have selected, notwithstanding its greater notoriety, partly because it is held of such high importance as to be with many the principal object of pilgrimage, and partly because it is probably the grossest imposture at this moment practised by the impudence of any priesthood on the credulity of any people.

Of the pilgrims who assemble every Easter at the Holy City, the largest and most ignorant portion are of the Greek and Armenian churches : to these therefore the Turks have committed the performance of the miracle ; the priests fail not to make some profit by their labours ; and the Turks, by their connivance, secure the double satisfaction of extorting the money and insulting the religion of Christians.

The ceremony is performed on the Saturday,

and the scene is the Holy Sepulchre and the little chapel annexed to it, which stands a separate building within the church on Mount Calvary. The fire which is therein miraculously kindled is intended to represent that which descended from Heaven at the prayers of Elijah. I shall transcribe the details nearly as I find them in my Journal.

Jerusalem, April 21, 1821.

THIS is called the Day of Charity; the doors are open both day and night, and free and gratuitous ingress is allowed to all; so that by ten o'clock A.M. an immense crowd was collected in the church and round the chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. In this strange assemblage we recognized the complexion and costume of every description of Christian: English, French, Lutherans, Italians, Greeks and Russians, Georgians, Circassians, Tartars, Armenians, Copts, Maronites, Druses, and the various tribes of Syrian Arabs, rushed together into one mass; and to complete the universal society, we were increased by the presence of an American and an Abyssinian.

For what purpose was it that every Christian name was here collected round the Sepulchre of Christ? How were these pious pilgrims occupied at that time and on this spot? They were collected for the purpose of witnessing either a miracle

or the mockery of a miracle; either a violation of the laws of nature by God, or the greatest insult which can be offered to God by man; either a fire lighted by the immediate act of Heaven, or an act which seemed to call down fire from Heaven, to destroy the scene of such monstrous impiety. They were occupied during the awful interval, not in prayer or in any serious meditation, not even in crossing, or prostration, or any vain ceremony of worship. So far were they removed from any such feeling, that they selected that particular moment for indulgence in buffooneries and indecencies far surpassing the extravagance of any Italian carnival. They ran and dragged each other round the Sepulchre; they mounted on each other's shoulders; they built themselves up into pyramids; they hung by their heels naked or half naked; they performed the circuit of the holy chapel, tumbling like mountebanks. The shouts and the shrieks from so many voices in so many languages, sharpened with oriental shrillness, surpassed any idea that can be formed by the languid imaginations of the west. And the spectacle was rendered still more various and the uproar more discordant by the violent proceedings of the Turkish and Albanian soldiers, in their vain attempt to tranquillize fanaticism by blows.

Presently we observed two priests, a Greek and an Armenian, enter the chapel of the Sepulchre;

the door was carefully closed after them, and strictly guarded by a strong body of Turks. At this sight the impatience of the mob rather increased, and they rushed with more earnestness towards the walls of the chapel, every one with new torches or tapers in his hand, trimmed to receive the expected fire. There were two or three small orifices of windows in the walls, to which every eye was eagerly directed. But their suspense was still somewhat protracted; for the Turkish governor, who takes especial delight in the miracle, and always superintends its execution, was not yet arrived.

The body of the church is overlooked by a gallery, which was occupied by Turks of distinction, by English and other travellers, by some Roman Catholics, and several women, chiefly Armenians. These spectators contemplated the scene beneath them with great difference of feeling. The Turks merely laughed with undisguised and unmitigated contempt: a Protestant might smile or sigh, as ridicule or pity predominated; but the memory of what he beheld could furnish matter for none but melancholy reflection. The Latins were sincerely indignant against the performance of a profitable imposture in which themselves had no share, and would willingly have counterfeited contempt, if they could have forgotten, the blood of St. Januarius, and similar impieties of their own church. The Armenian women sat expecting a

real miracle, in unlimited and unhesitating faith and confidence.

After the dispatch of more important business, the governor at length arrived and took his seat: every light had long ago been extinguished in every part of the church, and the storm beneath had been visited only by such glimpses of daylight as descended upon it, chiefly through the cupola, from a sky of the clearest blue and most heavenly tranquillity. Very soon afterwards we observed a glimmering through the orifices in the holy chapel; it increased to a flame and instantly became perceptible to the crowd. The shout which announced this event, the completion of the miracle, was the prelude to an exhibition of madness surpassing all that had preceded. The more zealous, or more vigorous, fanatics pressed towards the chapel, that they might obtain a more genuine light by the immediate application of their tapers to the divine fountain; and the eagerness of those behind to participate, though less perfectly, in the blessing, brought on a struggle with those who were nearer the sanctuary, and who were anxious to carry away their own light uncontaminated; but in this they seldom succeeded; and thus the fire was communicated with extreme rapidity, and in less than five minutes the whole church presented an uninterrupted blaze of several thousand tapers and torches. In the mean time the two priests, whose entrance

has been mentioned, were carried out of the chapel on the shoulders of some favoured devotees, either of them waving a celestial torch of the purest flame, which not one among the fanatic crowd either believed or suspected to be the creation of their own impious hands.

This fact is made credible by the general history of superstition; that which I am about to mention is even more extravagant, but not less true. An opinion is universally prevalent, that the holy fire has no power to burn or injure; and experiments of this quality are every year made by almost every pilgrim on his own person; all, of course, are singed, and burnt, and scarred; and yet, whether it be that the energy of their enthusiasm repels or deadens the sense of pain, or that each man believes his own suffering to be an exception, in visitation perhaps of some secret and unconfessed sin, all persist in their original belief, and continue to proclaim with one voice, in defiance of truth and sense itself, the innocence of the holy flame.

As soon as they were wearied by these excesses they gradually retired and dispersed, in order to preserve the remains of their tapers by melting them on fragments of linen which they destined to be portions of their winding-sheet, and a passport to a better state of existence. The Turkish governor and the other spectators departed also; and if the scene which we had witnessed were not such

as to make Christianity respectable to the mind of a Mahometan, it was such, at least, as might teach a lasting lesson of moderation to a Protestant; it might teach him to compassionate the fanaticism from which he is so far removed; and, by presenting to his actual observation the wildest imaginable enormities practised in the name of Christ, it might teach him to overlook the narrow limits and scarcely perceptible shades which may happen to divide him from his neighbour; it might teach him the exercise of charity towards trifling errors and partial deviations, by shewing him how boundless is the field of superstition, and how frightful are the paths which perplex it,

CHAPTER VI,

On the Monastic System.

As far as this period in our investigation, the doctrines and ceremonies attributed to the Greek Church belong in common to that of Russia; not so indeed the mass of corruptions which has grown out of them, and still less the classical and antique superstitions of the people; for many of the former were torn away by the reforming hand of Peter the Great; and the latter could have no existence in a country which has no antiquity. But in all the tenets of faith, in the number and nature of the Sacraments, in the use of liturgies, and in the rites of worship, the colony continues faithfully united with the mother-church. For Peter was one of the very few princes whose interference in the religious concerns of his people has been free from personal prejudice or vanity, and directed by no other motive than a wish for his people's improvement. This singleness of purpose facilitated the results of his consummate prudence; and as there was no peculiar dogma which he was anxious either to controvert or establish, he abstained from any aggression on the conscience of any of his

subjects ; and he was thus enabled to accomplish a national reformation in the ministry and discipline of the church, with no opposition from the people, and little from the ministers themselves ; for the object of his efforts was obvious and intelligible, when they attacked the vices and not the opinions of men, and were contented to turn the most flagrant abuses of religion to the utility of the state. As a mere political act, the reformation in Russia was complete in nature and success ; the moral advantage which it has produced is felt and acknowledged in every province and in every rank ; and in a religious point of view, I cannot but consider it as one of the most important incidents in ecclesiastical history. Of the many reasons for this opinion, I shall be satisfied to mention one ;—the regeneration of the Russian church exposes, by the clearest light and experience, the fallacy of that absurd prejudice, that the corruption of any religious system becomes, by long endurance, so identified with its body and substance as to make it impossible to remedy the one without risking the integrity of the other ; that of all existing establishments, churches alone are such as to admit neither of restoration nor repair, but are destined, by some secret necessity, to sink with all their original defects in unretarded decay, until they are finally swept away, to make room for some new and more enduring establishment.

If this foolish and fatal prejudice could in any case be well-founded, it would be most surely so among a barbarous and ignorant people, whose faith is established on no principles of thought or reason; who perceive nothing beyond the forms externally presented to them, and mingle the sanctity of their priesthood with all their religious notions. And yet such precisely were the people of Russia when they endured, without complaint, or any thought of apostacy, the sudden removal of those consecrated deformities which made the most prominent, and perhaps the most visible portion of their church.

The Russian reformation did not in any degree extend to Greece, and perhaps we shall find occasion hereafter to recur to it; at present we will not desert the country to which our observations have been principally directed, as the more immediate object of their practical utility.

The monastic life, which arose out of the melancholy fanaticism of Egypt and Syria, could present no natural attraction to the restless vivacity of the Greek; in fact almost every quality that is truly genuine and national in the composition of his character must have revolted against the gloomy innovation*. And yet, from the love of innova-

* It was natural to apprehend that the great prevalence of monkery in any country would in some degree influence the national character by the partial diffusion of its peculiar views,

tion, from the love of the marvellous, from the force of example, from the weight of authority, the corruption soon took root everywhere, and was nourished by the impure vapours of superstition. But it seems to me never to have attained, in a soil not naturally calculated for it, that exuberance of unhealthy foliage with which it darkened other countries, both of the east and west. And I am therefore determined to believe that, if under happier circumstances its entire extirpation shall prove impossible, it will at least be so trained as to bring forth, even in its old age, some fruits of social advantage and diffusive piety.

A very refined principle has been discovered to justify the monachism of the East. I really know not how far it has obtained favour in the Latin church: the hermit, the original and genuine *monk*, considered himself as a being self-devoted to the curse of God, for the sake of his brethren who re-

habits, and principles. But it has produced no such effect in Greece, nor has it deadened one fibre of the moral frame of that people. Indeed, the inmates of some of the larger convents have fewer monastic peculiarities and much more worldly vivacity and knowledge than it is easy at first to account for. But besides the singular tact and native penetration of the Greek, a reason for this may be found in the constitution of the system; for as it contains no distinct order of mendicants, and yet is not insensible to the profitable merits of mendicity, the members of each convent are successively deputed to this office; and thus there are many among them who at one time or other have travelled to some distance from their cells, and taken some part in the intercourse of society.

remained exposed to the storms and temptations of the world*. Animated by this generous motive, and full of the pious ardour which alike occasioned and resulted from it, he retired to some rugged grotto in the mountain side, which he sanctified by his solitude, his austerities, and his martyrdom. But it was soon discovered that this expiation could be made as effectually by social, as by individual seclusion; and then these holy persons assembled in desolate places, and founded large communities of voluntary victims, offering in themselves an immaculate sacrifice for the sins of man. In what manner the morality of mankind was probably affected by the belief that the virtues of the innocent were ever ascending to Heaven as a perpetual atonement for the sins of the wicked, we need not inquire; and it is equally certain that it became the interest of the rich and worldly to increase the number, if they could not always secure the purity, of these victims, so that the mass of expiatory piety might bear a constant proportion to the increase of their own crimes.

Founded on this principle, (which M. Stourdsa tells us was the *only* principle of their foundation,) monastic institutions spread widely and rapidly

* "A être anathème pour leurs frères demeurés en proie aux orages et tentations." Stourdsa. And again: "L'institution des ordres monastiques n'est fondée que sur l'idée fondamentale d'une expiation volontaire d'un innocent pour le coupable."

through the East; nor were there anywhere wanting, either fanatics who shared in the superstitions they created, or hypocrites who were willing to profit by them. For the reception of such persons, spacious buildings were erected in healthy and imposing situations, and the ease and conveniences which they offered, multiplied the number of their inhabitants.

Another circumstance which tended to their increase and conservation, was the sanctity with which they were invested, as well by the authority of the government as by the superstition of the people.

Under the disturbed and feeble sway of the later emperors, the respect for these sacred places grew more prevalent, as the laws had less force; for it supplied in many cases the place of law. After the fall of the empire, from the earliest period of Turkish rule, the Porte displayed the refinement of its political ingenuity, in making use of the Greek clergy as one instrument to govern the Greek people. The result of this measure was at least beneficial to the clergy themselves, and to all their religious establishments; and thus the sanctity of a Christian monastery was maintained*.

* Proofs of the general truth of this, in spite of occasional exceptions, may be found in most of the books of Oriental Travelers. During Dodwell's residence at Athens, the Turkish Disdar having incurred, by a gross indiscretion, the anger of his fellow-countrymen, took refuge in a Christian convent. Even during the fury of the present revolution, we learn that the convent of

under every circumstance of Mahometan despotism. Despotism, by this concession, must have suffered some degree of mitigation, since there existed any asylum which it dared not violate; and to us it is a grateful and consoling office, to trace any useful purpose to which Providence has been pleased to turn the folly of man, deriving even from our silliest superstitions some instrument to benefit or to correct us.

The convents of the East were not peopled only by the indolent or the fanatic; the law which excluded the secular clergy from the highest offices in the church opened their gates to ecclesiastical ambition. The monastery was the only school for bishops and patriarchs; and to the narrow education there received, we may undoubtedly attribute much of the selfish and passionate bigotry, which disgraced for above ten centuries the hierarchy of the East. But the institutions themselves failed not to derive advantage from the honours, the virtues, and even the vices of those whom they had sent forth to dignity; and to this class of their members was generally confined whatsoever learn-

St. Luke, on Mount Helicon, was spared by the Mahometan soldiers, who gained temporary possession of it. After they had retired, the monks returned and found over the principal gate an inscription to this purport: "The Albanians in the Mussulman army have prevented the Turks from destroying this convent, *because they hold it sacred, and have frequently used it as an asylum.*"

ing or skill in theology was found within the walls: No circumstance has contributed so much as this to the maintenance of the monastic order in the Greek church.

Some of the most beautiful spots in Greece have been chosen for the situation of convents. In deep and secluded glens on the mountain's side, among trees of luxuriant foliage, nourished by perennial waters, removed by the same elevation above the noisy disputes of the villagers and the noxious exhalations of the plains, the caloyer has little of earthly care or apprehension to divert his thoughts from the object they profess to prosecute; and if it be true, (and there are few who have not some times felt it true,) that it is useful and wholesome to the mind and character, that it enlightens our virtue and even animates our piety, calmly to contemplate the majestic expression of nature, and to dwell upon her beauty and sublimity, we shall willingly believe that the inmates of a Grecian convent may derive from the scenery that surrounds him an additional motive to religious meditation*.

But I make no doubt that it was the salubrity of these situations which in the first instance recommended them, rather than their beauty; for I

* M. Stourdza mentions with some admiration, the reply of a Russian monk to the traveller who ventured ignorantly to inquire, to what books his solitary studies were directed. "Il montra pour toute réponse, la terre et les cieux."

cannot perceive that the Greeks, in any age or state of society, have paid to the natural magnificence of their country, the admiration which it claims and deserves; but to a stranger meditating the monastic edifices of romantic Attica, Daphne and Carcas, Asmatos and Siriani, or gazing on the grotesque wonders of Megaspelia, or on those more attractive buildings which crown the Ægean islands, Tenos, or Paros, or Naxos, or the desolate Scio, it is hard indeed to believe that the "religion of the place" is unfelt by its inhabitants alone, and that the noblest spectacle on earth is presented to their hourly contemplation in vain.

The monks consist partly of caloyers or priests, and partly of lay-brethren. The employments of the former are of a nature wholly religious, and they rival in severity and inutility the most laborious absurdities of a Latin convent. Every day in Lent, the caloyers read over the whole Psalter, once with the Gloria Patri, and three Metaniæ after every fourth Psalm, and four at the end of every tenth. The Metania consists in bowing and kissing the ground three times, and the number of these must be completed to 800 in the course of twenty-four hours. In this occupation, the two first hours of the night, and the two immediately following

* It has been observed, that these buildings are frequently found on the site, and even partly constructed from the materials, of ancient temples or sacella.

midnight, are devoted. Matins begin at four in the morning, and last till dawn of day. The celebration of the tedious liturgy is followed by the recitation of the life of some saint or hermit; and of the nine hymns which follow, six are addressed to the Virgin, and three to the tutelary saint of the place or of the day.

During the intervals, however, between the numerous fasts of the church, the duties of the caloyer admit of considerable relaxation, and we may believe that the holy festivals are not celebrated with coldness or indifference, even in the bosom of the monasteries.

The domestic drudgery and other worldly affairs of the convent are committed to the lay-brethren. They tend the cattle, and cultivate with their own hands the cornfields, the vineyards and the olive-grounds; they collect or sell the produce, and so supply the human wants of their spiritual brothers, as to remove them as far as possible from all earthly contamination. For it was forgotten in the specious theory of monachism, that it is this very contact with earth which gives the strength to spring to Heaven; and that it is from this very soil of stains and pollutions, that our energies and our virtues are derived, and that it would be wicked, if it were possible, for any man to avoid the world who is gifted with the means to improve it.

The extent of the revenues enjoyed by the mo-

nastic order in Greece cannot be assigned with any certainty; they vary extremely in different provinces, and according to the caprices of an avaricious despotism. I have seen many convents which seem to justify by the shew of misery the lamentations of their inhabitants; others again have some appearance of comfort and abundance; but the most opulent among them bear no comparison with the monasteries of Italy and Sicily in display or in reality of wealth. There are twenty convents on Mount Athos possessing extensive lands and forming the metropolis of oriental monachism: yet from these united the Turkish government extorts no larger tribute than a thousand dollars a month, or about £500. a year; and as this fact must prove either poverty in the subject or moderation in the government, we need not hesitate to acquiesce in the former belief. Dr. Clarke has given us a melancholy description of the condition of Samos; he tells us that the whole island, being about eighty-seven miles in circumference, contains only 18,000 inhabitants, and that it is entirely in the hands of the church. "The swarm of caloyers and Greek popas have made a desert of this fine island, where all the qualifications necessary for a priest, and to live by the industry of others, is the talent of being able to repeat mass after memory. The bishop of Samos, who is also bishop of Nicaria, enjoys an annual income of 2000 crowns, and derives consi-

derable additional revenue from services rendered to the islanders in blessing their water and their cattle in the month of May." To this supremacy of the priesthood the traveller attributes the falling off from the ancient population and fertility of the island.

I know not whence Dr. Clarke received this information, or after what scrupulousness of examination he published it; but I know that in the resurrection of Greece, Samos was among the first "to cast away her shroud;" that standing alone in the very front of battle, she has repelled some of the fiercest assaults of the enemy, and that the life and vigour which she resumed in 1821, she retains unviolated to this moment; and I will not omit this occasion to express my hope that, whensoever the affairs of the East shall be finally arranged, Samos will be comprehended in the Hellenic republic.

The circumstances which gave birth to that variety * of religious orders which infest some Roman Catholic countries, have not existed in the eastern church; so that the ancient unity of the institution still subsists without any deviation from

* M. Stourda (p. 145) enumerates with great ardour the evils which have arisen from the multiplication of the monastic orders in the west; and at the head of the list he is so impartial as to place the reformation!

the original simplicity of practice †. The same rule, the same forms and ceremonies of worship, are everywhere observed, and the veneration for antiquity has preserved at least the semblance of fraternity and concord. The Greeks are extremely proud of this adhesion to ancient custom, and their freedom from the stain of Popish corruptions. But a Protestant will perhaps consider the successive introduction of new orders into the Roman church as the consequence rather than the cause of corruptions, which had already grown out of other events and accidents, ecclesiastical and political, that had not disturbed the church of Greece. He will rather consider it an attempt, not only to raise up fresh soldiers for the banners of popery, but also to restore the primitive severity of monastic discipline, relaxed by every form of vice and debauchery. But the remedy had no other effect than to hasten the progress of a malady already incurable, and to accelerate the certain hour of reformation. On the other hand, the monasteries of the East, however far they may have receded from the purity of the principle on which they were founded, fell at no period so low in sensuality as those of the Roman church. The epoch of their deepest moral degradation was probably the period immediately preceding the

† Stourdis says that, were St. Basil himself to reappear among the monks, he would recognize all as his children.

Turkish conquest. But there were circumstances even then which preserved them from entire debasement. The natural abstemiousness of orientals *, if it diminishes the fancied merit of their fasts, exempts them at least from the reproach of what is most gross in sensuality; another reason will be found in their form of Church government, which was neither in its principle purely despotic, nor demanded in its operation that entire prostration before priestly authority which permitted every earthly licence to the man who had consecrated himself to God. A third, and still more powerful reason may be, that the Greek convents never reached that splendour of luxurious opulence which adorned the lordly hierarchy of the west. These and other causes have contributed to save the church of Greece from the disgrace and the misfortunes which have afflicted (and, I would willingly hope; corrected) her rival. With all the follies and all the crimes which stain her history; with all the dissensions which have torn her bosom so prolific of heresy, she was outstripped by her competitor in the race of corruption, and her natural course was not nearly run when she was delivered into the hands of the Mussulman. The loss of indepen-

* This reason acquires more weight than we might otherwise be disposed to allow to it, from the fact that the convents of Russia, before their reformation, are described to have rivalled in vulgar profligacy the most degraded orders of the Roman church.

dence, which imposed foreign restraint upon her conduct, was at least favourable to her morality; the loss of part of her property diminished the temptation and the means of sin; the loss of her learning, which had so seldom been founded on any good principle or applied to any useful purpose, secured to her a kind of inanimate tranquillity. And thus it is that she has subsisted and subsists under the Turkish government, equally exempt from any dangerous vice or any active virtue. This would seem on slight attention to be a very melancholy condition, admitting little hope of melioration; for in this absence of energy and depression of vitality, it is in vain to search for the seeds of reformation, or to expect them to spring to spontaneous maturity from so cold and neglected a soil. And certainly the church of Greece is in no condition to work out its own reformation. But deeper consideration shews us that the very circumstances and character which render it incapable of any great internal effort, prepare it permanently to profit by improvements which may be introduced by external means. Its ignorance may be conducted to wisdom, because it is attended by little prejudice; its superstitions may be smoothed away, because they are not necessary for the support of the hierarchy, and its poverty will at least preserve from reproach the motives of its reformers. The reform, which it is too feeble to effect by its

own energy, it may and it must receive (like its sister, Russia) from the vigour of the civil government.

But we reserve this subject for our concluding considerations; at present it is sufficient to observe, that the spirit which predominates in the convents of the East, is contented, incurious ignorance—contented with the negligent performance of the prescribed services, and incurious respecting the truths contained in them, respecting the substance and reality of religion. At the fall of the Christian empire, as ambition no longer supplied motives for exertion, all theological learning, and even the skill and ardour of controversy, subsided with it. Poorer and more illiterate and more innocent than their brethren of the west, the monks of Greece might with much greater ease be compelled or persuaded to resign the inanimate indolence of an useless life, and become real and living members of a community which certainly stands in need of every aid to vitality.

CHAPTER VII.

On the Secular Clergy, and the Government of the Church.

THE Greek church permits to its secular clergy the enjoyment of marriage, with the restrictions that the priest shall marry once only, and a virgin. He can aspire to no higher dignity than that of protopapas, because the possession of the first offices is confined, as we have already mentioned, to the monastic order: for * “the orthodox church regards her bishops as holocausts smoking on the high places,” an atonement for the sins of her children; and she believes that the holiness of the sacrifice can only be perfected by celibacy. But the secular priest, whom this lofty monastic principle does not affect, was by the original church actually obliged to marry, and even to quit the priesthood at the death of his wife†. Of the permission, which now holds the place of that obligation, the greater part

* This is the expression of M. Stourdze.

† Such I understand to be the law in Armenia at this moment. Dr. King tells us, that the Greek priest may marry a second time, if he chooses to quit his sacred profession. I do not comprehend how this facility of laying aside the ministry when once assumed, is consistent with the high solemnity attached by this church to the *sacrament* of ordination.

of the clergy are found very ready to avail themselves.

Here then we are furnished with another instance, in which the Greek church is unstained by the later corruptions of popery. In the earlier ages of ecclesiastical history, before temporal ambition became the ruling spirit of the Vatican, it may be doubted whether of the two churches had farther receded from the simple purity of Christianity; for if there was more arrogance on the one side, there was more dissension and restless intolerance on the other. But the subsequent abuses of the Roman church, as they arose directly or indirectly from the nature of its government, did not spontaneously spring up in the East; nor were they easily introduced there, on account of the schism and animosities which distracted and divided the churches, and preserved, perhaps, that of Greece.

The situation of the secular clergy in the East is in general very low and abject. Taken from the lowest orders, and little improved by a most imperfect education, they associate with the common people as companions rather than instructors,* and their condition is almost equalized by the poverty which is common to all. Their subsistence is chiefly

* I have seen them engaged with their fellow-labourers at the harvest, and have been assured that they are generally hired at lower wages than the peasants, owing to their inferiority in skill or industry.

derived from the fees which they are able to collect for the performance of the occasional services of religion; and as it generally happens that the bargain must be made before the ceremony begins, and as a bargain in Greece is seldom unattended by some violence of feeling and expression, it is hard to conceive that much serious respect can be felt by the people, either for the person of the vender, or even for the ceremony so directly and indecently retailed to them.

We are informed that the secular clergy of Russia were disgraced, before the Reformation, by every description of vulgar sensuality; but in Greece, at this moment, though it be usual for travellers to inveigh against the gross and gluttonous habits of a Greek priest, I am very far from believing that the lower orders of the clergy at all deserve the charge of general immorality. On the contrary, I feel assured that there are many among them, as I know that there are some, whose poverty is not disgraced by avarice, whose ignorance is made attractive by simplicity, and who have found, even in the dregs of Christianity, many incentives to virtue, and many motives to piety.

In general, the revenues of the Greek church are scanty and precarious. The original and fixed endowment of the Patriarchate has fallen for the most part into the hands of the Turks, either by confiscation or by debt; for it has been a part of

the policy of the Porte to advance occasional loans to the church at high interest, which it rigidly exacts—so as to appropriate a great proportion of the income, and to establish an increasing claim on the principal, of the church property. I have been assured, that, during the few last years, this debt has rather increased than diminished*. The Patriarch succeeds to the property of archbishops and bishops, and even of those priests who die childless, and this is said to be the most productive source of his revenue. Occasional contributions are levied on the faithful, whenever the election of a new Patriarch, or the necessities of the church, or the caprice of the Turk, furnish a pretext or a reason. A bishop derives his revenue partly from such ecclesiastical endowments as may still exist in his diocese, and partly from collections in kind made under the name of free-offerings at his visitations, which usually take place twice a year. Several of the monasteries are taxed at the rate of a dollar annually for every caloyer, in additional aid of the episcopal state, which at last is very poorly supported. Respecting the maintenance of the lower orders of the clergy, enough has already been said to prove its insufficiency; and from this hasty glance on the resources of the different branches of the ecclesiastical establishment of Greece, it would appear that the revenues of the convents are these

* According to Ricaut, (page 98,) in 1672, it amounted to 350,000 dollars.

best secured and least subject to caprice or accident; and indeed, though very far removed from splendour or superfluity, they seem quite sufficient for the decent support of the order which enjoys them. And thus it happens that the least useful members of the religious community, those who least contribute to the instruction, or improvement, or happiness of the people; those whose very existence is the mere creation of superstition, the work of the fanaticism of man, enjoy some temporal advantage over those who labour not always ineffectually, and who owe their institution to the wisdom and the beneficence of God.

The government of a Christian church, of which the actual head is a Mahometan, would scarcely be a subject of serious inquiry, were it not that the Porte has constantly maintained the original form of its constitution; and that, in the prospect of any sort of reformation in any form of Christianity, the government generally presents the greatest obstacles to alteration, as it is often the most faulty part of the system. But it will appear that such is by no means the case in the present instance.

The Greek church is governed by four Patriarchs, those of Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria; the three last are equal and independent; but they acknowledge the superior dignity of the other, and his authority in so far, that nothing important can be undertaken in the regula-

tion of spiritual affairs without his consent. The Patriarch of Constantinople is elected, by plurality of votes, by the metropolitan and neighbouring bishops, and presented to the Sultan for institution; this favour is seldom refused if he bring with him the usual presents, which have varied, according to the varieties of wealth or avarice, from 20,000 to 30,000 dollars. But having conceded this formality in the election, the Sultan retains the unmitigated power of deposition, banishment, or execution; and it is needless to add that even the paltry exaction on institution is motive sufficient for the frequent exertion of that power; and it has sometimes happened that the Patriarch, on some trifling dispute, has been obliged to purchase his confirmation in office. This last possesses the privilege (in name perhaps rather than in reality) of nominating his brother Patriarchs; and, after their subsequent election by the bishops of their respective Patriarchates, of confirming the election; but the *barât* * of the Sultan is still necessary to give authority both to themselves, and even to every bishop whom they may eventually appoint in the execution of their office. The election of the other Patriarchs, as they are further removed from the centre of oppression, is less restrained, and their deposition less

* Some of the words of the firman run thus: "I command you to go and reside as bishop at the Isle of —, according to the ancient custom and to the vain ceremonies of the inhabitants, &c."

frequent. But this comparative security is attended by little power or consequence ; and two at least of the three are believed to number very few subjects who remain faithful to the orthodox church.

The Patriarch of Antioch has two rivals who assume the same name and dignity, the one as the head of the Monophysites or Jacobites ; the other of the Maronites, who appear to acknowledge the supremacy rather than the doctrines of the Pope, and are said to receive from Rome, not only their spiritual instructor, but the temporal reward of their submission. The Maronite resides at Damascus ; but the most numerous sect is the Jacobite, and perhaps its zeal may have been further animated by the vicinity of some few churches, which still respect the opinions and the misfortunes of Nestorius.

The Copts, who form the great majority of Egyptian Christians, have also embraced the Monophysite heresy, and obey their own patriarch ; and we have strong assurances that the church of Abyssinia is of the same persuasion *, and acknow-

* On the walls of the ruined churches which are found scattered along the banks of the Nile, in the lower parts of Ethiopia, where the Koran at present entirely prevails, I have often discerned painted figures of St. George, the favourite saint of the Greek church. But this does not prove the orthodoxy of those churches ; for the saints and ceremonies, and even the spirit of the mother church, were for the most part retained by her schismatics.

ledges the same head. The few who are still faithful to the Greek patriarch of Alexandria are chiefly found in the villages or capital of Lower Egypt.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem has suffered somewhat less from heresy and apostacy than either of his two compeers. In 1672, at the council assembled at Jerusalem by Dositheus against the doctrines of Cyril Lucar, the confession of the Patriarch was signed by seventy clergy residing in his own patriarchate. The influence of these holy persons may have been confined to narrow limits and few followers, and we cannot doubt their general poverty and ignorance; but their mere existence proves that the authority of the church found some respect in the districts which they represented.

From this brief sketch we may perceive, in the first place, that the hopes and principal energies of the Greek church are confined to the patriarchate of Constantinople; and next, (which is more to our present purpose,) that even within those limits the patriarch has little means of exerting any vigorous or independent control. It is true, that in the distant provinces among the lowest classes, there may sometimes be found a veneration for the *name* almost superstitious; but in his capital, the intrigues of jealous and ambitious prelates, and the watchful avarice of the sultan, provide him much more matter for terror than for pride. In as far as

the government sustains him, and the people are ignorant and servile, he is powerful; in as far as he is poor and resourceless, and an occasional instrument in the oppression of the people, he has little influence or authority even over the lowest. The same causes enfeeble his exertions even in matters purely ecclesiastical. His bishops, his priesthood, and his monasteries are not united to him by any uniform system of spiritual discipline; and if the mass be indeed animated by one heart and one spirit, it is not a spirit either proceeding from the palace of the patriarch, or identifying the existence of the church with his person or his dignity. On the other hand, we should remark that the same circumstances which have rendered him weak and destitute of power to do much good, have also deprived him of the energy to do any evil.

These remarks enable us first to observe, in continuation of our comparison of the Greek and Latin churches, how complete is the contrast between the actual condition of the patriarch and the pope. Divided by the narrow Adriatic, on the one side we see wealth, arrogance, and the assumption of temporal power; on the other, poverty, insecurity, and helpless dependence. And we next perceive with respect to the system of government in either case, that, as that of Rome is still distinguished by an active and patient discipline which studies to attach the ministers to each other and the people to the

ministry, and which has been directed zealously and sedulously through above twelve centuries to that great object, so the other would rather deserve the contrary reproach of looseness, and incoherence, and insubordination. It is easy to observe, that such is the necessary consequence of its feebleness and subjection to foreign oppression, and that a body which has been deprived of the power of independent action will lose its internal energies with its power. This is true; but if we refer to the earlier history of that church, and trace it from the days of Constantine to those of Palæologus, we shall not find that it was at any period animated by that deliberate spirit of domination, which has marked the progress, and which marks the decay of Rome. For, in the first place, the patriarch of the East has at no time affected temporal sovereignty nor claimed any authority over princes; and as he has not arrogated the lofty character of the Roman, he has not been compelled to establish any system or commit any crimes to preserve it. Therefore the privileges of the clergy of Greece continue nearly in their original condition; and the monastic order, the root of most of the enormities of the West, escaped the various corruptions which overspread it, as soon as it became useful to the ambition, and necessary to the despotism of the popes. Again; the entire subjection of the lower orders to spiritual authority has never become so absolute a church

maxim in the East as under popish rule; or, if the principle be common to both churches, at least it has not been carried into effect there with so much deliberate industry. In these and in other points their character has been widely different from the moment that either can be said to have assumed a distinct character; and as that of Greece has generally been free from the restlessness which has habitually possessed and agitated the other, it is exempt also from the systematic innovations which have thus been successively introduced, not into the doctrines only, but into the government and discipline of the Latin church.

We have observed that the government of the Greek church, even in the days of its independence, did never conceive that the principle of its own existence was the subjugation of the human understanding, and that it never acted steadily and consistently upon that principle; and for this reason their clergy have at no period exercised that dangerous control over the people which they have occasionally possessed in all Roman Catholic countries, and which they still possess in some. Yet having many means in their power to obtain that influence, of all others most flattering to the pride of man, assuredly they did not individually neglect the use of them. The authority of pious eloquence over a passionate and enthusiastic audience; the terror of excommunication on minds by nature prone

to superstitious fear ; the daily infliction of auricular confession on the prostrate spirit of the penitent—these are engines of despotism which cannot safely be entrusted to anything human, and which were abused through a succession of ages by the clergy of Greece. But the influence thus usurped was in fact usurped by the clergy (if I may use the distinction) rather than by the church ; it was created by the individual exercise of spiritual power rather than by the system of government ; it was exerted for the gratification of individual, perhaps professional, pride ; but not for the support of a deliberate scheme of ecclesiastical domination : and it was therefore neither so debasing in its consequences, nor in its nature so permanent.

Nevertheless, we might reasonably have expected that when by Turkish conquest the Church lost its independence, the clergy would have been deprived of most of their authority. The contrary has probably been the result, and the lower classes have been as much devoted to the priesthood during their iron age, as during any that preceded it. This will not appear singular, when we recollect that it has been the unvarying policy of the Turk to employ the Christian church as the favourite means of oppressing his Christian subjects. From whatsoever motive this policy originally proceeded—whether from a wanton wish to insult the religion by the same act by which he trampled on

those who professed it ; or from the desire to identify the church with the government in tyranny and in hatred ; or to make the hierarchy in some measure responsible for the conduct of the people, and hold them as a kind of hostage at his court—the result has certainly been this, that, in as far as the priesthood has been upheld by the Porte, and left in immediate contact with the people, the people have continued to approach it with deference and submission. I repeat my opinion, that it was this very circumstance which, under the guidance of Providence, has mainly preserved the nation from total apostacy ; and the chain which was intended to bind both church and people in one fold to the throne of the oppressor, has been converted into a bond of religious union, which the pressure of external calamity has rather contributed to tighten.

And yet, though the influence of the priesthood in Greece may have been sufficient to preserve the people faithful to the religion of their ancestors, I must still express my dissent from those who represent it as vast and unlimited ; and in support of this, without appealing to the uncertain results of personal observation, I should first refer to the abject poverty of most of the secular clergy, which raises them little above the level of the lowest peasants ; and next to their ignorance, which leaves them nearly where their poverty has placed them. Such persons must possess very limited authority

beyond the routine of their professional duties. The monastic clergy are little more enlightened than the others, but they possess one advantage in the circumstance, that they are not dependent on the justice or charity of the people for the supply of their daily necessities, and they have moreover the means to acquire in their retirement a higher reputation for sanctity. Their influence is, therefore, more considerable, and, as far as concerns ecclesiastical matters, as the attendance on confession, the observance of fasts and feasts, and other affairs of equal spiritual importance, it may be nearly absolute ; but I am much mistaken if the power possessed by the Greek clergy, even over the most credulous of their subjects, be either so various in its objects, or so searching in its nature, or so extensive in its operation, as that most usually exercised by the Roman Catholic priesthood in Spain, in Italy, or even in Ireland.

I account for this fact by considering that the religious body last mentioned is not only more generally enlightened, and more carefully educated, but also educated on a *system*, of which the most important object is the acquisition of popular influence.

CHAPTER VIII.

On Toleration.

M. DE STOURDZA has consecrated an entire chapter to the praises of Toleration, which he considers as one of the noblest characteristics of the Greek church. It is some merit even to have claimed this virtue; and we become curious to learn how far its principles are intelligible to a Greek, and on what foundation he fixes them. In the pages which contain them we discover much sense and truth, perplexed by many mystical absurdities. After some abstract reasoning on the nature of toleration, the writer divides it into three kinds, ecclesiastical, political, and individual. Under the first of these heads we find the following sentiments: "Far from perpetually soliciting the support of the secular power to suppress the errors of opinion, the church ought rather to study to disarm that power, and not to allow its holy cause to be made a pretext for projects of passion or ambition. An ecclesiastical police is only useful and legitimate when it confines itself to the repression of actual abuses, scandals, and deviation from public morals. From the moment that it endeavours to inculcate abstract truths otherwise than by words, the church not only loses sight

of the object of its anxiety, but also degrades the dignity of man, materializes intelligence, and de-thrones the Divinity," &c. "The church should not be governed by the passions which control individuals."

Under the division of political toleration, the most important passage is the following:—"The forms of government admit endless variety—the object of government is always one—the security, welfare, confidence, and stability of the social edifice. Now, these results are all incompatible with intolerance. There is no security when the secrets of the conscience are exposed to the misinterpretation of informers; there is no welfare when the peaceable exercise of worship, the bonds of affinity among families, the intercourse of commerce, the objects of emulation are constrained, disorganized, shackled, and disputed by intolerance. There is no confidence when there is no indulgence and security, and when dissimulation becomes a duty; there is no stability when interests are divided, when a part is placed on its guard against the whole, when low and servile views are directed against the independence and good faith of the citizens." On the third subject, that of individual tolerance, after claiming the universal right of private opinion, the writer proceeds to assert, that "persuasion is as reprehensible as violence, except in the extraordinary case of a visible vocation from heaven, or of

a ministry authorized by the law*". The sentiments which I have quoted, however familiar most of them may be to the heart of every Protestant, were rather to have been desired than expected from the pen of a Greek, and we receive them with joy and with hope, in full and perfect assurance that the church which is inspired by them must already be very far removed from utter degradation, and that the wounds which disfigure its surface have not reached the sources of life, or exceeded the means of remedy. The operation of one just and noble principle will not fail to create or awaken many others, and at least will prepare the way of return to the genuine spirit of primitive charity. This proud claim of the oriental church is not unfounded in reality. Through the entire extent of the Russian empire, fertile in sectaries and schismatics, no man is excluded by his religious opinions from any public honour or office; and in the republic of Greece, when it recently started into existence, the first sound which interrupted the yells of massacre was the voice of toleration; the first article of the Constitution of Greece proclaims liberty of opinion and worship to all who live under it, and throws the road of national distinction equally open to every Christian. Gladly do we welcome this faithful omen of her regeneration, and

* This very broad principle is probably advanced in justification of the expulsion of the Jesuits from Russia, in 1719.

we dare to believe that, being thus engaged to imitate the surest wisdom and the highest virtues of the west, she will patiently pursue her noble object, enriching with foreign institutions her domestic morality, and engrafting upon her ancient honour the more enduring plant of Christian excellence.

In pursuance of this subject, while comparing his own with the Latin church, M. de Stourcza does not hesitate to adduce toleration as the test and touchstone of their truth, the visible sign of uncorrupted antiquity and divine protection. "No other characteristic is so available or so admissible to impartial eyes; for inasmuch as it is true that the union of all Christian communions around the sepulchre of Christ is a spectacle conducive to the propagation of his worship, so is it absolutely certain that the view of the flames of the Inquisition can make nothing but apostates and infidels." As impartial spectators of this controversy, we are, indeed, ready to admit the force of that characteristic, and to acknowledge the truth of the remarks which follow: for by whatever arguments the church of Rome may have defended her own opinions, she has certainly never affected any respect or indulgence for the opinions of others. But we should here deliberately remark, that it is not from her doctrines but from her government that all her worst principles have proceeded; it is not because she believes in the mediation of the saints, or in the real pre-

sence that she has been sanguinary and persecuting, but because the despot who presides over her has claimed the spiritual dominion of the universe ; and those who have suffered from her barbarity have not suffered through any inherent qualities or necessary influence of the opinions which they have rejected, but because the rejection of those opinions included a denial of the pope's supremacy, and contempt of his authority.

This is a very common truth, yet it may not be unprofitable to repeat it ; because many Protestants are in the habit of transferring to the tenets of the Roman Catholics the dislike which they feel for their *Church*, and of attributing our mutual want of confidence to doctrinal differences. And even the most pious persons sometimes forget that there is no peculiarity in the religious opinions of a Catholic which can reasonably subject him to our dislike or suspicion ; nothing which unfits him for the discharge of every moral duty and every Christian virtue ; nothing which should prevent us from courting his friendship and confiding in his integrity. The causes which have divided us, and which may still, perhaps, suspend our perfect harmony a little longer, have an origin purely *human* ; the seeds were sown in avarice and ambition, and the harvest of oppression and intolerance has been gathered in ; and when the hatred which has been excited by the acts of the Roman hierarchy shall

have passed away with its power and arrogance, it will be acknowledged that its mere doctrines contain no elements dangerous to society, or degrading to the moral character of those who profess them*.

These considerations may tend to correct the feelings which some are still disposed to indulge towards their Roman Catholic brethren; and there is also one piece of instruction which we may all derive from them,—that, as any danger to be apprehended from popery springs from its practical, not its speculative, errors, and as those are of human imposition and invention, and therefore liable to change and reformation from human accidents, we need not despair that those earthly and perishable appendages will shortly fall away, and thus remove every motive of distrust even from the most timid and most abject mind.

Among those countries which have set the example of enlightened toleration, M. de Stourdza has not omitted the mention of England; and it is at this point indeed where the principles of the Church of Greece have the closest contact with our own; and whatsoever claims to truth or orthodoxy or divine protection she rests on this foundation, we are worthy to divide, as we are unwilling to dispute, them with her: for it is hence that we derive our highest consciousness of excellence and our safest

* See Note at the end of Volume.

ing the existence of a different form of worship, and which is common to us with a Chinese or a Turk, but from that bold and Christian spirit which bids us embrace our fellow Christians, of whatsoever denomination, as our brethren. We believe that universal unanimity on religious points can never be attained by man, and what is unattainable we know to be unnecessary; but we do not rend the garment because its colours are various or its texture unequal. We look down upon the many forms of Christianity which surround us, and we see that the matters on which we differ are sometimes few in number, and not always essential in importance; while the path which we are endeavouring to trace with whatsoever inequality of knowledge or diligence, the object to which our eyes and exertions are alike directed, is one and the same to each and to all of us. And in this consideration we forget, as God will certainly forgive, the errors of those who seek him ignorantly, and we assist them in the common race of salvation, and guide them by the generous hand and light of friendship.

From this extended view which we love to take of the objects and nature of Christianity, we have learned, I trust, one important duty, and we never deliberately depart from the practice of it. To withdraw our regards from the points on which we differ with our fellow Christians, and to fix them

on the vast field of our agreement to soften away the lines of separation, not to exaggerate their magnitude ; to open our gates to those who have fallen into feebleness, not to shun their contagion ; to embrace even those who seem opposed to us, without any hesitation of fear or jealousy—these are the offices which form our pride and become our principles. Fear and jealousy are the attributes of error and weakness—to encourage them is to create the dangers whose semblance they shrink from ; they have no access to the eminence on which we stand, and which we shall continue to maintain as long as our councils are guided by the spirit of peace and conciliation ; dissuasive of those angry cavils and controversies which first convert dissent into enmity, and then inflame the rancour of our adversary, without diminishing his power.

We are grown wiser by the follies of our forefathers ; we have learned that our interests are associated with our duties ; and we know that that free and fearless generosity which we derive from our religion will ensure to us, in its unrestrained exercise, the respect and affection of all Christians ; and we avow that this is among the dearest and most substantial of those merits to which, under the protection of Providence, we dare to look for our security.

CHAPTER IX.

On the Hopes of a Reformation of the Church.

BEFORE we enter into any speculation respecting the future condition of the Oriental church, we must direct our attention for a few moments to its origin. We have already mentioned that the claims which it pretends to orthodoxy and catholicism are principally supported by appeals to its great antiquity, and to a foundation resting on apostolic ground ; and some might be led by these pretensions to identify it with the primitive church, from whose simplicity it is in fact so far removed. But that boasted antiquity possesses, in fact, no higher origin than the General Councils ; and thus in strictness the perfect church of Greece must be contented to date its existence from the last of these, or from the concluding part of the eighth century ; since it had not attained that fulness of doctrine and discipline which forbade further innovation until that period. However, we have had occasion to observe, that an obstinate adherence to the body of "orthodoxy," then completed, and a blind veneration of its own spurious antiquity, have preserved it from most of the inventions and innovations of its rival, and main-

tained it in a kind of intermediate position between the purity of the source, and the corruption of the swollen stream. The same principles still subsist, and are the last which will be shaken; and we have great reason to hope that, under happier circumstances of knowledge and independence, they will lead to the exclusion of such tenets and practices as are not coeval with the basis and substance of the church. Assuredly, at the present moment, if it were advisable to press any argument on the Greeks, touching the erroneousness of any of their tenets, the only argument which could be advanced with hope of advantage, and without danger of offence, must be drawn in every case from the want of antiquity, rather than of truth; for it would avail little to prove that scripture does not authorize any doctrine in dispute, unless it could be shewn also that the Councils do not inculcate it.

In examining the hopes which we may reasonably entertain of some sort of religious improvement in Greece, and in tracing the probable nature and limits of such improvement, we shall do well first to review some of the tenets and practices already described, that we may learn what means of self-regeneration are contained in the internal economy and constitution of the church. And with this object, it will be useful to persevere in the comparison (somewhat casually undertaken, and pursued I hope neither partially nor intemperately) which we

have already drawn between the rival churches, in some of their distinguishing features ; but I shall now confine myself to those points which bear most directly on the question of a practical reformation in either of them.

And first, as to their professed doctrine, it appears that both parties alike invoke the Virgin and the Saints, and bow before their painted images, and that both publicly disclaim any worship of the image, or even supplication to the Being itself, other than to a mediator. Both churches admit the same number of sacraments, and celebrate most of them nearly in the same manner ; the badge of transubstantiation is worn with equal parade (though with unequal affection) by both ; and they insist with the same earnestness on the principle and practice of auricular confession. But this seeming unanimity is disturbed by some differences of a nature truly important, and worthy of deep consideration, because they are connected with the spiritual influence of the church, and the operation of its doctrines on the habits and conduct of the vulgar.

In the first place, the Greeks entirely disavow the great practical corruption of Purgatory. In rejecting this fable, they place their chief boast in having escaped the dark and demoralizing abuses which have flowed, and which continue to flow from it. And next they appear to have been at every time exempt from the grossest corruptions of the sacra-

ment of Penance, as the sale of indulgences, dispensations, and the like—thus disdaining another powerful instrument to enslave and vitiate the mind of the people. Supererogation has never been a tenet of their church, nor in any age has it advanced any claims to infallibility. Again, the very doctrine of transubstantiation is a recent appendage, worn rather in attestation of the triumph of Rome, than as the means of spiritual authority, or the implement of ecclesiastical ambition; and ill indeed does it accord with the fading colours and antique habiliments of the church, with the folds and texture which affect primitive simplicity. We may add, that the admission of this doctrine is the only important innovation which the church has ever made on its original belief, and that the mass of the people, and even a large part of the clergy, profess not even now any strong or fixed opinion on a subject, on which, in fact, their curiosity has never been exercised, and which is neither endeared to them by long hereditary usage, nor by any ceremony of customary solemnity.

It would be a painful and unprofitable task to compare the various absurdities in form and ceremony which almost equally disfigure either church, and to fathom the depths of superstition into which they have respectively fallen. But it is necessary to observe, that in these respects very great diversity prevails in the different branches of the same

church ; that the grossest practices in either are rather local than universal ; and that a Catholic or a Greek of Berlin or of Petersburg, might sincerely disclaim the impieties which are practised at Naples or Jerusalem. Indeed, to make a comparison entirely impartial, it would be necessary to search for our parallels to the abuses of the East, not in the civilized regions of European Catholicism, but rather in those provinces of South America, where Christianity appears to have assumed as degrading a disguise as the malice of Satan could suggest to the folly and the wickedness of man.

The next subject to which we shall turn is the form which monachism has taken in the two churches. In the one it has become inseparably connected with the interests, and almost necessary to the supremacy of the Pope. To that end it has been fortified and enriched, and diversified : in the countries most purely popish it still continues to possess real weight and popular influence ; and, it is truly observed, that the diminution of the Pope's personal authority is very generally associated with the decline of the monastic order. I do not mean that the influence of the secular clergy is much affected by either of these circumstances, for that depends on very different matters ; only that the strictest alliance between the Pope and his monasteries has been always held necessary for the interests of both ; and that this alliance forms one of the

strongest features of the pure system of Romanism. In the Eastern church the same necessity by no means subsists, because ambition has never gained such entire possession of the patriarchal throne as, by increasing its claims, to multiply the difficulties of supporting it, and to make the aid of bigotry and fanaticism indispensable to its defence. From this very essential difference we may safely infer that the reformation, or even the entire abolition, of the monastic order might be much more easily accomplished in Greece than in any Roman catholic country, because the personal interests of the head of the church would not be deeply affected by such a measure. This facility is greatly increased by the comparative poverty of the Greek monasteries, which lessens their direct power of resistance, as well as their influence over popular prejudice. And we may add, that the restless vivacity of the national character is so peculiarly unsuited to the genius of monachism, that its natural impulse will lead it to favour any measures hostile to that unso- cial institution.

Another great object of the Roman catholic system has been, to divide the priesthood from the people by the broadest lines, both with a view to secure the internal union of that body, by giving them separate interests, and also to set them apart for veneration, as a privileged caste and superior order. Their celibacy, and the distinction in the

Eucharist, were instituted chiefly for that purpose. The Greek Church is free from both these innovations, as it was never strongly animated by the spirit which dictated them; and thus its progress to reformation will be unrestrained by some of the greatest practical difficulties which obstruct that of its rival.

Again, the general looseness and incoherency of its government forms a strong contrast with the uniform consistency of the Roman Catholic scheme, and presents much greater hope of an entire reform. Little opposition could be expected from the Patriarch, and it would be offered with little success. The more popular manner of his election, the facility of his deposition, his want of all temporal power, his long abandonment of any lofty spiritual claims, his comparative disconnection with the monastic system, his poverty, and the absolute feebleness proceeding from all these causes, would render his resistance nearly ineffectual. And thus the very ground whence the greatest difficulties spring in the reformation of a Roman Catholic Church,—its head and its government,—offers no serious obstacle to the regeneration of that of Greece.

Without pursuing this comparison into greater detail, we are justified in coming at once to these conclusions:—

That there is no reason, in the nature of the Greek Religion, why it should not speedily become as pure

as any existing form of Romanism—that there are many reasons why it should become more so.

And here let it be observed, that I am not blind to that evidence which proves to us that, however unchangeable may be the professed tenets of the Roman Church, the *religion* has assumed in different countries great diversities of character; and that, in some of these, as in parts of France, Switzerland, Germany, and the Netherlands, its practical abuses have been so far softened down or abandoned, as to leave us much less to reprehend in its exercise, or to regret in the perseverance of its professors. This change is chiefly to be attributed to the contiguity and influence of Protestantism; and thus it is that our form of Christianity is operating silently, and not unprofitably, even where its visible progress appears to be arrested for ever. And it seems to me that we should content ourselves with this pacific and noiseless triumph, of which the gradual procession is daily advancing and lengthening, undisturbed by the clamour of controversy, uninterrupted by the malice of rivalry. It is vain to imagine that Roman Catholics will ever resign to us the *name* of their religion; but in its practice, in its ceremonies, in the interpretation of its doctrines, in the feelings and conduct resulting from all these, they will continue to approach as near to us as our own dispositions will allow them; and our nominal differences will be finally forgotten in the reality of our piety and our concord.

And so, when I speak of the reformation of the Greek Church, I do not imagine the possibility of its conversion or union with the Church of England, or any other Reformed Church. I only suppose such an improvement in its doctrine and practice, and especially in its practice, as will remove its grossest scandals and most pernicious abuses, and make it respectable, not only in the eyes of a Protestant, but also in the opinion of the most enlightened among its own members.

The example of Russia is sufficient to prove that the corruptions of a church may be cast off without danger to its substance. The church of Russia was, perhaps, more degraded, and the Patriarch certainly much more powerful, when Peter ascended the throne, than is the case in Greece at this moment; the clergy were more profligate, and the people equally superstitious. And yet a very few years were sufficient to alter the government of the church, to correct the morals of the priesthood, and even to root out many of the superstitions of the vulgar. The outlines and features of the faith remain the same as before; only the trappings and appendages have been cast aside, and the religion of Russia is now practically better than that of any Roman Catholic country. Probably in the progress of civilization, it will admit of some further reform, which will terminate, like the former, without any danger to its integrity. And if it shall

gradually approximate to ourselves in purity and excellence, we will not descend to dispute its *title*, or question its foolish claims to "Catholicism."

These are the principles of the reformation which I would willingly see introduced into the church of Greece, and on which it is not idle to speculate, because it is not unreasonable to expect it.

CHAPTER X.

On the Nature and Extent of the Reformation practicable in the Church.

HAVING shewn the possibility of very extensive improvement in the Greek church, I shall proceed to examine, rather more minutely, the particular point to which the exertions of its reformers ought to be confined, or at least principally directed. And let no one object to me that I measure the extent of such reformation by calm consideration of what existing circumstances will permit, rather than by the suggestions of a pious enthusiasm. For if there be any value or benefit in these inquiries, it will certainly be found in the reasonable examination of probabilities, and not in the mere passionate expression of our wishes.

And, therefore, I shall not hesitate to admit that it would not now be prudent to introduce any sudden alteration into the doctrines, or into the sacraments of the church ; because both the people and the priesthood are at present too little enlightened either to understand the importance of such a change, or to foresee the great practical advantages which would finally result from it ; and because some improvement both in the tenets themselves, and in

the manner of giving them efficacy, will hereafter follow the progress of religious knowledge, and spread, without offence or danger, the more certainly as the less perceptibly.

Any alteration in the doctrine of a church ought entirely to proceed from the voluntary deliberation of its ministers, and their sincere conviction of its necessity; but under no circumstances should it ever be imposed by the authority of the civil government; and least of all under those in which Greece is now placed.

Indeed, respecting Transubstantiation in particular, I must repeat an opinion already expressed, that it will fall into contempt as soon as any candid discussion shall have disproved its antiquity, and shewn it to be a scion of Romish growth engrafted on the fair plant of oriental orthodoxy. I confess that the sacrament of Confession, with its visible train of evil consequences, is, in truth, the most pernicious corruption of either church; and it is such, indeed, as almost to justify the direct interference of government, on account of the unnecessary influence which it gives to the priesthood over the conscience and conduct of the people: for that influence, if opposed to the government, may be dangerous to the state; and if subservient to the government, it cannot fail to be injurious to the people. But means may probably be found indirectly to discourage the practice of confession, as

long as it shall be found impossible to erase the sacrament from the books of the Church. But so strong is my general conviction of the present imprudence of interfering with any points of doctrine, that I shall forbear to dwell longer on this subject, and shall proceed to examine those departments of the church which appear to admit of immediate reformation.

The monastic system is among the first of these; and it rests at this moment on such feeble foundations, that its entire subversion would, in my opinion, be no difficult measure. The general principles of Christianity would, perhaps, lead us to wish for the absolute extirpation of one of its worst abuses. But when I reflect on the unsettled condition of the country, and the dangers connected with any violent change in its religious establishment, I confess that a reorganization of the system in question seems to me far more desirable than its entire destruction. For, whether we consider the poverty of the government, or the ignorance and demoralization of many of the leading men, or the example of France, which the Greeks are on all occasions too ready to imitate, there is great reason to apprehend that the abolition of the monasteries would be attended by the confiscation of their revenues. Now we need not dwell on the injustice and illegality of this measure, for such considerations might not deeply influence those to

whom they would be directed ; but we may employ a few words on its obvious impolicy. The monastic revenues, while they constitute by far the greater part of the whole church property, bear but a trifling proportion to the national capital ; so that the effect of their confiscation would be to entail a perpetual tax on the nation for the payment of a number of stipendiary clergy, without relieving even the momentary exigencies of the government : or, even supposing them sufficient for this purpose (as they certainly are not), supposing that they would be honestly expended, rather for the welfare of the state than for the profit of individuals (as they probably would not be)—the measure which should plunder one portion of the community for the benefit of the rest, must ever be accounted among those feeble acts of temporary expediency, which bring with them lasting burdens as well as endless ignominy, and which most surely mark the weakness, as well as the wickedness, of the government which commits them.

On the other hand, it would not be difficult to introduce such changes into the system as would make it permanently useful to the state. The monasteries might be converted partly into places of education, partly into poorhouses or hospitals ; and the admission and discipline of the monks subjected to regulations similar to those imposed by Peter on the convents of Russia ; and, perhaps, a

portion of the revenues might be justly (and if justly, wisely) apportioned to the more decent maintenance of the secular clergy, many of whom are at present little removed from absolute penury. Such appear to be the principles on which a reformation might be so conducted, as to confer lasting advantage on the nation, without throwing any blemish on the honour of the government.

The next point to which we address ourselves is the government of the church; and here the question naturally arises, how far it would be politic for the Greeks to imitate the changes which have been introduced into this branch of the establishment in Russia. The great feature of that change was, the abolition of the patriarchate, and the substitution of a permanent Synod, under the guidance of the Emperor, for the direction of all ecclesiastical affairs.

I can perceive only one reason in favour of this change, while there are many which strongly oppose it. It might seem dangerous to the independence of Greece, that the head of her church should reside in the capital of her adversary, as his certain slave and probable instrument in any project for her degradation. And on this ground, though the temporal influence of the patriarch is not, in fact, very great in Greece, it might still be prudent to limit his interference to matters purely spiritual, and strictly relating to the doctrine and discipline of the church. But, with this precaution, it would

be entirely unnecessary, and, I think, highly imprudent, entirely to disclaim his authority. For, in the first place, it may be of some importance to respect the ancient prejudices of the Greek people ; but, at least, we should not forget that those who deserve that name as citizens of the new commonwealth form no large proportion of the entire body of the Oriental church, and that their hopes of political aggrandizement are chiefly fixed in their future association with such of their communion as still remain under the Turkish yoke. So that, if it be a measure of some hazard to untie any of the ecclesiastical bonds which now hold so many tribes and nations united, it would certainly be most unwise to cast off that authority, the *name* of which (be the reality what it may) is assuredly the most visible principle of their union. Again, when the patriarchate was abolished in Russia, the power of the Emperor was such as to enable him to establish an effective legislative synod in its place, and this, we must admit, was the most difficult exercise of his power. But in Greece, where the government, which must be partly popular, can scarcely hope for immediate stability and vigour, it would not seem possible to erect any substitute for the patriarchal authority, even if it were desirable to dissolve it.

For these reasons the Greeks should continue to acknowledge the Patriarch, at least as the nominal head of their church, while, at the same time, they

may appoint some resident Primate from among their own bishops, by whom the details of their church affairs may be regulated, without the necessity of perpetual reference to Constantinople.

Lastly, respecting the rites and outward practices of the church, it is of course impossible to lay down any particular rules for reformation. In Russia, the authority of Peter was sufficient at once to crush the grossest superstitions, and put a stop to the most mischievous delusions which were before practised upon the lower orders. In Greece, a less despotic government will speedily produce the same effect, because it will act upon a more intelligent people. Greater simplicity may gradually be introduced into their ceremonies, the abundance of their festivals curtailed, and the length and number of their fasts reduced, and their severity discouraged. Rational and moral discourses may be substituted for legendary declamations, and the attention of the vulgar diverted from the stories of their saints to the history of the Bible. Nor is it absurd to suggest that, to the accomplishment of this most important object, pictural representation may be made to contribute perhaps as well as oral exhortation. For we must never forget, in our speculations respecting either the progress or the improvement of Christianity in the East, the peculiar character of the people to be acted upon—a character averse from sober meditation, impatient of reason, prone

to enthusiasm, slow to the abstraction of deliberate piety, zealous for outward show and representation, and acts, and objects of sense *. And this consideration, while it points out to us one secondary method of introducing improvement into the religious system of the East, shows us also the extent of reform by which our present expectations should be satisfied. It is not possible at once to impress a volatile and passionate people with the spiritual and reflective nature of religion; to reduce them to earnest and motionless prayer and penitence; to persuade them that, in the offices of worship, there is little merit in gesticulation, and attitude, and bodily prostration, wherein nature, as well as habit, has encouraged them to place the very substance of religion. It is not possible at once to unteach the superstitious lessons of many centuries, nor will it be easy at any time to compose the violent dispositions of the East to the tranquillity of Protestant devotion. In the mean time, it is undoubtedly true that, as any people shall recede

* Many, perhaps most, of their ceremonies are, in fact, *representations*. The asterisk placed over the sacramental bread represents the star of the Magi. In Passion Week the whole process of the Crucifixion is almost theatrically represented, at least at Jerusalem. The function of the Holy Fire represents that which burnt the sacrifice of Elijah—and such is the spirit of their whole religion. Thus their violent narrations of the miracles or sufferings of a saint are addressed indirectly to the senses, and their very Repentance (*μετάνοια*) is nothing more than an outward act. See page 87.

farther from barbarism, the character of its worship will be less influenced by sensible objects, and thus a great improvement will assuredly attend the progress of civilization among Orientals ; though it be not probable that they will soon arrive at our simplicity. Nor indeed is it necessary for the honour of religion, or the unanimity of Christians, that they should do so ; for, in the general scheme of Providence, every reasonable variety in form and ceremony is permitted to the worshippers of Christ, and is consistent with the single unvarying spirit which animates and unites his universal church.

CHAPTER XI.

On the Means of effecting the Reformation.

THE protocol of March 22d is an admirable commentary on the treaty of the 6th of July. It is dictated by a perfect knowledge of the real interests and character of the parties for whom it legislates ; and its certain effect will be to give reality to the independence of the one with the least possible offence or injury to the power or dignity of the other. Among the many excellent articles of that arrangement, there is one to which it concerns our present purpose shortly to attend—the nature of the government proposed for the new state. A constitutional * monarchy is undoubtedly that which is best suited to the immediate necessities of Greece, as well as to the sober wishes of its most rational inhabitants ; and I do not hesitate to add, that, under the present circumstances of turbulence and licence, arising from the character and misfor-

* It is not without pride that I refer to some speculations respecting the final pacification of Greece, which I published above four years ago, with the sincere conviction that the scheme then proposed by me, though it might not satisfy Philhellenic enthusiasm, presented the only safe hope for her real independence. The result has proved the wisdom of that scheme, as it coincides, to its very details, with the plan which has since been adopted by the Allies.—*Visit to Greece*, ch. 17 and 18.

tunes of the people, and aggravated by revolutionary lawlessness, it is desirable that the greatest part of the real power should be vested in the monarch. A strong and united government is absolutely necessary for the existence of the nation; and a popular government can never be such, where the people has no education and little virtue, and neither understands the limits, nor has experienced the habits, of independence. In the progress of civilization and morality, the lower orders will deserve a greater share in the management of public affairs, than it would be prudent to accord to them now; and we need not doubt that the native energy of their character will suggest to them hereafter the means to obtain it.

My remarks on the prospects of a moral and religious reformation in Greece have proceeded, of course, on the supposition of an effective civil government, without which I can see no hope of any permanent improvement; the necessary changes in the ecclesiastical system must emanate from the same source. We have already observed, that the body of the Oriental Church is too weak and too widely distracted, and too humbly dependent to possess any means of self-reformation; but, in the newly-constituted state, a Synod of the most eminent prelates, convoked by the Chief of the government, would be the legal instrument of introducing such alterations as should seem desirable both to them-

selves and to him. And we should here remark, that the spiritual head of the Greek church has, in every country and at every period, acknowledged the pre-eminence of the temporal authority; and thus the rule which prevailed under the Christian not less than under the Turkish princes of Constantinople, and under the archdukes as well as under the emperors of Russia, will naturally extend itself to the kingdom of Greece:—the constitution and history of the church equally prove, that the right to originate a reform in it is possessed by the civil government.

The first attention of the reformers would, of course, be directed to the removal of the most glaring scandals and abuses;—to the suppression of pretended miracles, the reorganization of the monastic system, and other subjects already mentioned; and such measures would be eminently useful as the commencement of a new era, and the foundation of a more perfect system. But their principal and more deliberate object would be, to give such form and stability to present improvements, as to make them the means of drawing after them those other changes which it may not be possible at first to effect. For we must not forget how seldom it happens that a great national reform can be accomplished by one man or one race of men; but that the highest hope which reason permits to us, is to trace the outlines of a splendid prospect,

which cannot be filled up in our time, but which awaits the patient co-operation of distant years, in order that the fulness and richness of its excellence may contribute to the happiness of posterity.

For the accomplishment of this final object in Greece, one instrument only is necessary—the establishment of a judicious scheme of education; and, with that view—with a serious view to the moral regeneration of the country, it is not difficult to point out the path which ought to be followed. For it is not a greater mistake to imagine (as many imagine) that *all* the vices of Greeks are attributable to slavery, than it is blindness to believe that those vices will universally be remedied by the random introduction of knowledge; or that the unrestrained exercise of the faculties is a sufficient security either for wisdom or virtue. Indeed, if it be true that among people the most civilized, under governments the most happily constituted, there is just ground to fear the general dissemination of profane learning unless it be accompanied by moral and religious instruction, have we not reason to apprehend the most pernicious consequences from the imperfect education of a nation emerging, under an unsettled government, from the lowest barbarism? Might it not lead them into general scepticism or absolute infidelity? Surely, then, it is with great caution that this remedy should at present be applied to the moral infirmity of Greece, though it be

that from which its ultimate restoration may be expected.

It appears to me that such caution will be best observed, if the education of the lower classes be in the first instance confided to the clergy; the education of the clergy should occupy the immediate and most diligent attention of the government. This latter duty cannot possibly be entered upon too early or too zealously; both because the actual ignorance of the priesthood admits of no neglect; and because the intellectual advancement of that body should precede any general attempt to enlighten the mass of the people. For a reform in the religious system would necessarily attend such advancement; and it is highly desirable that that reform should be commenced and conducted by the priesthood—lest the vulgar, whom very slight improvement would enable to discover the grossest corruptions of their religion, should lose their respect for the religion in which they were discovered. For these reasons I think that the first step towards the permanent happiness of Greece, towards the establishment of its prosperity on the only lasting foundation—the virtue and piety of the people—is to afford to the ministers of religion such occasions to instruct themselves and to purify their system, as may enable them to make *that* the instrument of regenerating the nation which has certainly been the means of preserving it.

To regenerate the people through the clergy, and the clergy through the government, is the best wisdom of Greece. And there is the greater hope that it will be practised, because this scheme was actually recommended by the present President, in his "Observations sur le Sort des Grecs *," addressed to his countrymen before the revolution. Some of the considerations contained in that admirable document are, of course, inapplicable to the present condition of Greece; but the principle on which they rest is beyond the reach of time or circumstances; and we may believe that the statesman who has been so long impressed with its truth has not neglected any means to give it efficacy—"that literary should not be disconnected from moral education, and that both are necessary for the welfare of his people." To this end he has further proposed, "that public instruction should be identified with that of the clergy, and held not only not in divergency, but inseparable from it" Capodistrias knew better than any man the real necessities of his country, and he boldly proclaimed the only effectual method to relieve them. He was not so mad as to imagine that mere emancipation from political servitude would create national virtue or insure national happiness. His eye was fixed on the moral wants of his country: because the end

* Visit to Greece. Introduction.

of his anxiety was not her immediate brilliancy, but her perpetual and substantial prosperity; and he saw that the cure for her moral disorders was no where to be found except in her religion.

These are principles which the wisest statesmen have ever been the slowest to question, because they are taught by the universal history of nations; and never did nation more urgently demand their diligent and judicious application than Greece demands it now. She stands on the very shores of infidelity: the tumult of revolution; the influx of licentious opinions, vaguely delivered and imperfectly understood; the growing connexion with the French; the lively genius and restless impatience of the people; the low intellectual condition of the great proportion of the clergy—form a combination of dangerous circumstances, which cannot otherwise be resisted than by the infusion of new energy into the system of the church—by the careful education of its ministers, and the removal of its most obvious abuses. These cares demand the *earliest* attention of the government. Hereafter, when these instant perils shall have passed away; when a purer system of religion shall have established juster moral principles; when a pious and enlightened priesthood shall have been raised up as a barrier against the evils which attend universal education, (as some evil will generally attend every important blessing,) I should no longer hesitate to throw open the gates of know-

ledge; nor would I distribute her treasures with a sparing or a fearful hand. For the ways of knowledge are not far removed from those of truth;—and that state of society, wherein its progress is nowise restrained, but where its occasional deviations from the path of the highest wisdom are counteracted by a body educated for that office, and vigilant and fearless in its execution, appears to me to enjoy the highest probability of moral prosperity that the infirmities of man will permit—and such may be the destiny of Greece.

Such are the speculations which have occurred to me, and which I deliver not inconsiderately, respecting a country whose literature has led me to her acquaintance, and whose acquaintance has endeared her to my memory—in such manner, that she is become not only an object of pleasing recollection, but also of deep solicitude and reasonable expectation. And though the blessings which we anticipate can scarcely be brought to pass in our days, it is at least some satisfaction to have expressed our hopes and proffered our counsel, and even thus to dedicate to the loveliest Land on earth the labours which have been directed to her service.

END OF PART I.

PART II.

THE
HISTORY OF THE GREEK CHURCH
DURING THE
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY.

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THE HISTORY,

&c. &c.

THE tranquil and unvarying condition of the Greek church from the date of the Seventh General Council, until the beginning of the seventeenth century, justifies the complaint of Mosheim, that its history furnishes few materials for philosophical investigation: for it happens in ecclesiastical, as in other records, that the most attractive, perhaps the most instructive periods, are those of violence and innovation. During an interval of above eight hundred years, the constitution of this church underwent little alteration, either in doctrine or discipline. Its wealth, indeed, and courtly influence, suffered successive diminutions from various political causes, until the final wound inflicted on both by the Turkish conquest. But this violent revolution, while it little affected either the form or principles of the eastern faith, certainly tended rather to increase than lessen the authority of the priesthood over the lower orders. This result probably proceeded from three causes. First, it entered into the earliest policy of the conquerors to make use of the Greek hierarchy as the instrument of enforcing the obedience

of the people, and of riveting the chain less rudely and more securely ; and it was natural that the ministers of religion, being thus made the medium of temporal authority, would be invested by the partial vulgar with some portion of that power which it was their office only to transmit. In the next place, in the common degradation of both priests and people, the most pressing calamities were inflicted upon the latter, so that in the relative situation of the two parties the alteration was in favour of the clergy. And lastly, deprived of a native and even a Christian king, bleeding under the tyranny of a stranger, and repelled and revolted by habitual insult and outrage, to whom could that afflicted people turn for aid or consolation on earth, except to those who held the keys and stood before the portals of heaven ? Thus it is not surprising that they clung to their priesthood with the affection which belongs to the desolate, and paid that reverence to them which the terrors of the temporal government forbade them to direct to itself. Hence spread the custom of submitting their private disputes to the arbitration of the ministers of their religion, in preference to the capricious partiality of Turkish justice ; an ancient custom which now became more general, and contributed more than any other cause both to augment their influence, and to contract the circle which separated the people from their conquerors, and draw them closer round their church.

In asserting that the church itself has suffered no material alteration during this period of its affliction, I would not be understood to deny that some corruptions have been introduced into the practice of religion; for the glimmerings of knowledge which still continued to enlighten the priesthood even during the latest ages of the eastern empire, were extinguished by the conquest of the Turk. And where an increase of ignorance in the clergy is attended by an increase of their authority over the people, two consequences will commonly ensue; that the external form and name of religion will be maintained with extraordinary rigour and constancy; but that its heart and essence will melt away into vain and impious superstitions. The former of these circumstances is conspicuously exemplified in the enduring Christianity of Greece; the latter may have existed also: but it would be very difficult to select from the mass of vain observances any which ought peculiarly to be ascribed to that period, and not very easy to shew that the Eastern Church is at this moment at all more deeply degraded in Greece than it appears to have fallen in Russia before its reformation by Peter the Great. At any rate, whatsoever these corruptions may have been, they have proceeded from the ignorance and wretchedness of the clergy, rather than from their vices or passions; they have grown up carelessly and accidentally; they have not been sown with deliberate malice—they have crept into the system in a period

of blindness and helplessness ; they have not been engrafted by the active ambition of a clear-sighted hierarchy, seeking to establish universal empire upon human credulity. For this reason we may entertain rational hopes of their easy extirpation, when the revival of civilization and literature shall have dispersed the causes which nourished them.

The external history of the Greek church during the long interval above mentioned, is distinguished by its disputes with that of Rome, and by the firmness or violence with which it resisted every overture of *union*—a term which, by the peculiar nature of popery, is synonymous with submission. The want of moderation displayed in these disputes was common to both parties ; the misfortunes and the reproach arising from them afflicted the whole body of Christianity ; but on calm retrospection we find it more easy to pardon the intemperance which rejected an unfounded claim, than the arrogance which urged it ; and in the final success and independence of the church of Greece, we may be permitted to express such joy as arises from the nearer hope that we see of its final reformation.

To attain its favourite object, the Roman church has endeavoured from time to time to profit by the political fear and weakness of the Greeks. In the beginning of the fifteenth century, when the existence of the empire was immediately threatened by the Turkish arms, it was hoped that the religious scruples of the Orientals would lose their import-

ance at the approach of great national calamity, and that they would be found willing to sacrifice some parts of their faith, in the hope of preserving the remainder. Accordingly, they were led to expect that submission to the Papal See would be made the means of interesting the nations of the West in their preservation, as the Pope would not fail to exert for them, when papists, that influence to which, as mere Christians, they had little claims on him. Under these circumstances, and with these sentiments, the deputies of the two churches assembled at the Council of Florence in 1439; and after some days of disputation it was agreed that the most contradictory phrases had, in fact, the same meaning, and the most opposite doctrines admitted of easy reconciliation; a seeming harmony was thus introduced, and the Greeks returned to communicate the success of their negotiation to their countrymen. They were received with indignation as traitors to the orthodox faith, and they awaked with astonishment and shame from the fascination which had been thrown over them. A few years afterwards Constantinople was taken by the Turks; and taken it would still have been if the church of Greece had confirmed every act of the Council of Florence; and Greece possessed at least one consolation in her misery, that in the ruin of her political fortunes she had at least preserved the independence of her faith.

The Mahometan conquest presented no discou-

agement to Papal ambition, but rather inspired it with new hopes, by opening a new channel for its circulation. We need not notice the celebrated letter of Pius II. to Mahomet II., that most memorable monument of arrogance and folly, except to prove how very steadily the attention of Rome was fixed upon the East, under any circumstance of change ; but of the continuance of her secret exertions at Constantinople, and even of their partial success, we have evidence sufficient in the fact, that, between the years 1453 and 1599, no less than thirteen of the patriarchs who sat on that throne professed the Roman Catholic faith. It is possible that some of these patriarchs, in adopting the tenets, may also have individually acknowledged the authority of the church of Rome ; but as their succession was interrupted by others*, equal at least both in number and sincerity, who continued faithful to the ancient doctrines, the Latins cannot boast of more than an occasional and a disputed supremacy ; and when we reflect on the violent jealousies which were kept, by such disputes, in continual operation, and on the cruel animosities thus excited, which might otherwise not have been, we cannot congratulate them on having advanced either the happiness or the virtue of the Greeks by their interference. But we must

* *Aymon, sur la Religion des Grecs : à la Haye, 1708.* The succession of the Patriarchs, at least during this period, was as rapid as that of the Popes had ever been.

admit that they have extorted more from the helplessness of that people, and the venality of their government, than could ever have been obtained from their reason or their passions; and we can also conceive it very probable, that the tenets occasionally proceeding through so many years from the patriarchal throne, and leading to the possession of it, may have obtained some prevalence among a thoughtless people and an ambitious priesthood.

During the latter part of this period, the Reformation had made great progress in the west; and in the natural hope of sympathy from the great rival of Rome, its leaders made overtures of coalition to the church of Greece. Jeremiah *, the Patriarch of Constantinople, listened to them with respect; and, in pointing out the differences which prevented their union, he appears to have expressed himself with such temperance, that, while the Romans extol his pious orthodoxy, the Protestants, also, have found matter in his answers to persuade them, that his opinions, in some important respects, coincided with their own †. And thus, though the

* Some previous steps had been taken by Melancthon, who sent to Joseph, Patriarch of Constantinople, a Greek copy of the Confession of Augsburg. This document was accompanied by a very temperate letter of explanation, to which, however, the Patriarch vouchsafed no answer. The divines of Tubingen renewed the overtures to his successor Jeremiah.—*Mosh. Cent. 16, sect. 3, part 1.*

† “ Les traites dogmatiques du Patriarche Jérémie ont été

attempt at coalition was not successful, yet there can be no doubt, that the emancipation of so large a portion of Europe from Popish principles restrained their progress in the East; and gave encouragement to those already opposed to them, by shewing that they might be resisted and contemned with impunity, and thus breaking the charm of opinion by which alone they had been upheld and consecrated. Such must have been the necessary effect of the Reformation on the Eastern Church, whatsoever had been the opinions of the reformers; but when it was moreover discovered, that those opinions had many points of coincidence with its own faith; that they professed no other foundation than the Scriptures, and abhorred the recent innovations of the Vatican, the triumph obtained by them so very near the fountain of papacy, must have opposed great impediments to its course through more distant regions.

But the zeal and activity of the Roman church seemed to increase with the difficulties which obstructed it. The spiritual possession of the East had long been a favourite object of her ambition, even in the days of her glory, and some advances towards it she had assuredly made since the Turkish con-

imprimés en Grec et en Latin à Wirtemberg, l'an 1684; c'est pourquoi le lecteur est prié de voir cet ouvrage, et il y trouvera justement le contraire de ce que les Docteurs de Sorbonne et de Port-Royal ont fait entendre aux Grecs."—*Aymon*, p. 276.

quest. But the field was now no longer undisputed. The banners of the Reformation were unfolded on the banks of the Bosphorus, and the city of the infidel was gratified with the spectacle of Christian dissension; from the city it spread over a large part of the empire, and disturbed the greater portion of the seventeenth century. In this contest, we confess, with sorrow, that the arts, or the weapons, or the discipline of Rome, were, in some degree, triumphant; for, though she sustained the final failure of her grand object, the *subjugation* of the Greek church, she succeeded in obtaining from it some public confessions of faith, containing doctrines not widely differing from her own. And though we may doubt whether these confessions fairly represented the faith of the majority, we must still admit their effect in disseminating the opinions they contain: and thus has Rome, even in her retreat from this disputed country, left behind her the deep traces of her invasion. Her gloomy warriors are indeed withdrawn; her Jesuits and her Sorbonists are no longer to be found wrangling with the priests or corrupting the government; but some of their opinions still remain engraved on the public tablets of the church, and on the conscience of its members.

Some of my readers may wish to be made briefly acquainted with the details of this contest, which I cannot but think of great importance in ecclesiastical

history ; and as I know not to what single author to refer them, I may be permitted to lay before them such a concise account as I have been able to extricate from the confusion of controversy.

In the long succession of patriarchs who have occupied, since the schism with Rome, the throne of Constantinople, it would be difficult to find one who has merited any distinction, either for talents, or liberal acquirements and character, except Cyril Lucar (Κύριλλος Λουκαρις). He was a native of Candia, born a Venetian subject, and received his education at Padua. But seemingly unsatisfied with the partial knowledge here opened to him, and animated, perhaps, by an early antipathy to the Roman church, he proceeded to make a personal inquiry into the learning and the heresies of the West. He passed some time both in Germany and England, and returned to his native land the confirmed and enlightened adversary of popery. His merits speedily recommended him to the attention of Meletius, Patriarch of Alexandria, who sent him, in the year 1600, on a special message to Sigismond, King of Poland ; in which country it was feared that the doctrines of Rome were gaining ground upon the "Catholic Oriental orthodoxy." A few years afterwards, on the death of Meletius, Cyril succeeded to the patriarchate, and held it for some time. During this period he corresponded with certain eminent Protestants, espe-

cially those of Holland. His long epistle, "De Statu Græcarum Ecclesiarum," addressed to John Wytenbogaert, Minister of the Gospel at the Hague, contains a clear account of the condition of the Eastern Church, and a very temperate and rational exposition of its doctrines; a few complaints respecting the aggressions and intolerance of popery are expressed with great moderation; and the sentiments of religious charity which we find, bear every evidence of sincerity. We must notice one other letter, addressed, in the year 1616, to George Abbat, Archbishop of Canterbury. It appears that James the First had offered a theological education in England to any Greeks properly recommended for that purpose, and Cyril now accepted this offer, in behalf of one Metrophanes, who afterwards became Patriarch of Alexandria. He begins his letter by lamenting the controversial advantages conferred by a scholastic education on the Latins and Latinized Greeks, and the difficulty of finding those among his illiterate churchmen who could contend with their sophistry. Both these epistles are written in Latin, not without elegance.

It was probably within two or three years from the date of this letter, that Cyril was advanced to the throne of Constantinople. He was not destined to enjoy this honour undisturbed, for being now placed in the very centre of Jesuitical intrigue,

he was also the hateful object of its activity. He was speedily deposed and banished to Rhodes, and as speedily restored to his dignity. The former object is said to have been accomplished by Romish influence; the latter by the interference of the English ambassador. So much, at least, is certain, that the Turkish government failed not to turn these dissensions to its own advantage, and dealt out its justice or its mercy in exact proportion to the inducement immediately proposed for either.

In the years 1623 and 1624 fresh efforts were made by the adversaries of the Patriarch; and the court of Rome engaged in the dispute so far as to send an emissary to Constantinople to effect his ruin. This person was charged with political accusations against Cyril, in order to destroy his credit with the Porte: he was accused of an understanding with those enemies of the Turks who were of his own communion, and of fomenting the rebellion of the Cossacks. The failure of this attempt was followed by another far more extravagant, and highly characteristic of the arrogance whence it proceeded. The Pope nominated a patriarch of his own, and sent him with a suite of bishops to the Greek metropolis. This insult, which was intended only for a Christian rival, was felt in the recesses of the Seraglio. Without loss of time or ceremony, the episcopal train was conducted to Turkish prisons, and the Roman patriarch

escaped the same or a worse fate, only by a precipitate flight. But what reverses ever repressed the industry of Rome;—fertile in manifold expedients, and ever present to avail herself of every fortuitous advantage? Anxious to improve the education of his countrymen, Cyril had introduced into the capital a printing-press from Holland. The French monks, who had already established a school there for their own purposes, to which they would willingly have confined all instruction, and who were not desirous that the Greeks should become more learned than they chose to make them *, presented themselves at the Porte, and revealed the plot which was preparing alike against the Pope and the Prophet; for they carried with them a book which had been written by Cyril during his residence in England, in which he proved the divinity of Christ against the Jews and the Mahometans; and such, they added, are the books which are intended to proceed from the press of Cyril—such his treacherous designs to corrupt the loyalty of the Greeks! The Turks, without further inquiry, sent down one hundred and fifty Jamissaries, who scattered the fragments of the press, and would have approached the Patriarch himself with no milder treatment, had he not foreseen and avoided the tempest. The triumph of the Latins was com-

* Aymen, *Dies. Prælia.*, p. 10. •

plete—they had crushed the first bud which had broken out from the seared trunk of learning—the earliest hope of the revival in Greece of knowledge, and reason, and virtue, they had blasted—their exultation was unbounded and unalloyed.

Cyril appears to have maintained his authority (for his second deposition is disputed) with little or no interruption until his death, in the year 1638. Respecting the circumstances of his death there is also some uncertainty; and all that we can deliver with confidence is, that he was strangled in his palace by order of the government. Protestant polemics have asserted, that the Jesuits took advantage of the absence of the Sultan and the Vizier on a military expedition, to prevail on an inferior officer, the Bairam Pasha, to execute the common enemy of Turks and Latins. Of the truth of this charge, whether probable or not, I can find no sufficient evidence; and as similar accusations have been violently advanced and repelled on both sides, the clemency of history may acquit the combatants of the heavier crime, and convict them of malice rather than of murder. Besides which, under the government of the Sultan, there was crime sufficient in the piety and learning, and various excellence of this holy Greek, to raise our wonder that he should have been allowed to live so long.

That act of Cyril, which has obtained for him more honour and more obloquy than any other, is

his celebrated "Confession of Faith." This important document is dated from Constantinople, January, 1621; it was first printed in Holland, in 1629, nine years before the death of the Patriarch; and as we have no evidence that it was ever disclaimed by him, we may discredit the assertions of those who hold it supposititious; for they appear to rest on no good authority, and are contradicted by the very anathemas which were hurled against him as its author, by the Latinists themselves at the Council of Constantinople. Indeed, the genuineness of this production is beyond any reasonable suspicion; but, in examining its nature, there arises some doubt whether we should rather consider it an exposition, or a reformation of the Greek faith; whether it faithfully express the opinions of the body of the church as they then actually existed, or whether some of the tenets were not in fact peculiar to Cyril himself, which it was thus his object to render familiar and acceptable to his fellow-countrymen. The Roman Catholics maintain the latter opinion, and I feel strongly disposed to agree with them; but we shall best arrive at truth by shortly investigating some of the disputed articles of the "Confession."

It consists of eighteen chapters, or articles, and four answers (*ἀποκρίσεις*). Of these chapters, the first and seventh deliver the Greek doctrines of the Trinity, the Procession of the Holy Ghost,

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and the Incarnation; the fourth derives all evil from the *dæmon*, or from man; and the sixth refers original sin to the fall of Adam; the ninth and thirteenth relate to saving faith as including good works; the sixteenth enforces the necessity of baptism for salvation; and the fourteenth treats of the co-operation of free-will with the Holy Spirit, by which it is excited to action in the regenerate. In the above eight articles, I can discover nothing inconsistent with the professed opinions of the Greek church.

Of the remaining ten, there are two of a tendency decidedly Calvinistic;—the third is one of them:—“ We believe that the perfectly good God, before the foundation of the world, predestined to glory whom he had elected, in no respect regarding their works, nor having any cause impelling him to this election, other than his good will—divine mercy. In like manner, before time was, that he rejected whom he has rejected: the cause of this rejection, if we look to the uncontrolled mastery and dominion of God, we shall doubtless discover to be the Divine will; if we turn to the laws and rules of order which Providence uses in the government of the world, we shall perceive it to be his justice; for God is merciful, and just also.” The eleventh article speaks also of those elected to eternal life. Now the charge most violently urged against Cyril was that of *Calvinism*, and every effort was made

by his enemies to render that term odious throughout the East. The article I have quoted does, indeed, partly justify this charge in the proper sense of the word ; but the Latinists of the East adopted it in a much broader acceptation, to include all the heresies of the Reformation. Thus in the acts of Constantinople and Yassi, Protestants of all opinions are designated by no other name than Calvinist ; and it was not until the year 1679 that the Greeks appear to have noticed any distinction between the followers of Luther and Calvin ; and they then described it as being perfectly unimportant *. We shall not be surprised at the prevalence and continuance of this error, when we recollect that they derived most of their theological instruction from French emissaries.

The eight remaining articles appear to be levelled more or less directly against the principles of the church of Rome. The second, tenth, and twelfth, respectively assert, that the authority of Scripture is superior to that of the church ;—that Christ is the only “ head ” of the church, and that the chiefs of particular churches have no claim to that title ; and that the church is fallible, except in as far as it is under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The fifth article most properly inculcates humility in all our super-human speculations. The eighth is this —

* *Ἀδελφὰ δὲ πῶς φρονεῖ Λουθῆρος Καλουίνος, εἰ καὶ ἐν τισὶ διαφέρειν δεκκοῦσι.*—Acts of Council of Jerusalem, Aymon, p. 276.

“ We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ, sitting on the right hand of the Father, is there our mediator, and intercedes for us, alone acting the part of a true and legitimate chief priest and mediator; wherefore alone he takes charge of those belonging to him, and presides over the church, which is enriched by a variety of blessings and ornaments.” So daring an attack upon the office and authority of the saints, would scarcely be more popular with the Greek than with the Latin people, whether it accorded or not, with the genuine doctrine of the Church.

The three other articles refer respectively to the number of the Sacraments, the nature of the Eucharist, and the intermediate state of the dead. In distinctly limiting the holy mysteries to two—Baptism and the Eucharist (art. 15), we doubt not that Cyril deviated from the faith of his ancestors, and meditated a reasonable innovation in the doctrine of his church, by removing one of its oldest corruptions. In the chapter (17) respecting the Eucharist, while he asserts the spiritual presence of Christ, he at once denies any miraculous transformation of the element, “ such as Transubstantiation, idly invented, teacheth *.” On this point, too, we cannot doubt that he would find many opponents in his own church; for, though its most

* Παροδία, ἢ ἡ κλῆσις ἡμῶν παριστῆσαι καὶ προσφθεῖν, οὐχ ἢ ἡ ἱερουργία εἰς τὴν διδασκίαν ΜΕΤΟΤΣΙΩΣΙΣ.

ancient creeds enjoin nothing positive on this subject, it had been so diligently inculcated by the Romish emissaries for nearly two hundred years, and proposed by them as so essential a part of the Romish system, that it had acquired some advocates among a credulous and an enslaved people; and even among that vast majority which disclaimed the *authority* of the Pope and the other corruptions of his church. The last article places the departed in a condition of immediate happiness or condemnation, according to their merits, and discredits the "story of purgatory" (τὸν περὶ Καθαρτηρίου μύθον)—a story which appears at no time to have obtained any honour in Greece.

Of the four "answers," three respect the reading and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures, and the fourth relates to the worship of images; the worship is forbidden, but the use permitted, yet obviously with sorrow and reluctance, and with a full consciousness of the evils thence proceeding, and of the inability of the church to arrest them*.

By this brief examination, we perceive that the Confession of Cyril, among many doctrines universally admitted by his church, promulgated others which either had not before been acknowledged, or were a subject of dispute and division, or were actually in opposition to received opinions,—for

* Καὶ στήναι τὴν φερόν κρείσσον ἢ καὶ ἡμᾶς εἶναι ὁμολογοῦμεν.

such I suppose to have been the exclusion of saints and martyrs from the mediatory office, and the limitation of the number of the sacraments to two. In these respects, then, we may consider the Confession not as a mere exposition of faith, but in the broader view of an attempt to reform the abuses of the Church; and thus, while we admire the courage and wisdom of its author, we shall feel no surprise at the opposition which he encountered while living, or the virulence which has poisoned his memory. And may we not hope that, however fruitless of immediate advantage, this noble effort will not be unheeded or unrenewed, under brighter circumstances, in a more enlightened generation? It is a great thing to have dealt the first blow in the tedious conflict with corruption and prejudice; and though it usually fall with little effect, and not uncommonly prove fatal to the hand which has dared to inflict it; yet the deed will ever find many admirers among good and reasonable men, and among many admirers some imitators. For men are by nature prone to imitate the great and glorious things proposed to them, rather than to strike out any new paths to glory; and many will ever be found to follow whithersoever one commanding spirit will lead. Such considerations, I think, give us reason to hope that the example of Cyril Lucar will not be lost to posterity, and that his Confession will some day be made the basis of a much purer

system of religion than the misfortunes of their ancestors have bequeathed to them.

Cyril Lucar was succeeded by his adversary, Cyril of Beroea, the violent partizan of Popery,—a fact which lends some probability to the Protestant account of his death. And it is certain that his ashes were scarcely cold, when a Synod was assembled in the Capital itself, to anathematize his person and his opinions, and every man who held them orthodox.

The public Declaration ($\Psi\acute{\nu}\phi\sigma\epsilon\iota\varsigma$) of this Council, however, confines itself to five or six points of attack, and several even of these are founded on an unfair representation of the doctrines of the Confession; those which are inculcated in their place are strictly Romish. This edict was signed by about fifty ecclesiastics, several of whom held offices in the Patriarchal Church at Constantinople.

Cyril of Beroea did not long enjoy his triumph; he perished, like his predecessor, by a violent death; and, indeed, during this period of furious dissension, so rapid was the succession by death or deposition, that between 1620 and 1671 we find the patriarchal throne to have been vacant nineteen times.

Very soon afterwards, it was found necessary to make a second assault on the "heresy" of Cyril; and in the year 1642 a council was summoned for that purpose at Yassi, in Moldavia, by the Patri-

arch Parthenius. Its labours give evidence of more deliberate hostility. The articles of the Confession are separately examined, and every one of them (excepting the seventh only) is found to be tainted with "the Calvinistic heresy." Doubtless, in the estimation of the Latinised Greeks, this alone would have been sufficient for their condemnation, even if they had no wise deviated from the faith of "the Apostolic Church;" for they had been inspired by their papist instructors with such terror of the name of Calvin, that any creed might seem preferable to agreement with him. But the reasonableness of Cyril's doctrine is disputed, as well as its orthodoxy; and when we compare the observations on the Confession, with the articles to which they are respectively directed, we find them so full of the strangest misapprehensions, that we might be led to believe them levelled against some other creed, or some very different copy of the same creed, unless we had learnt from centuries of lamentable experience, that there is no gulf of intellectual darkness and perversity too deep for those whom religious dissension has blinded.

But the Synod of Yassi could scarcely have claimed any place in history, had it not been distinguished by the presence of some Russian prelates, who took an active part in its deliberations. The Russian church possessed as yet no public standard of orthodoxy; and while it professed to follow in

doctrine the unsettled faith of Greece, it surpassed its feeble guide, both in the laxity of its discipline, and in the ignorance of its ministers and its members. Peter Mogilas, "archbishop of Kioff and all Russia," willing, if possible, to remove this reproach, as well as to extirpate some weeds of heresy which were beginning to sprout up in his neglected vineyard, readily united in reprobation of Cyril's Calvinism; and it seems probable that, on his return to Russia, he immediately published the "Exposition of the Russian Doctrine and Faith*." This Exposition, after undergoing some amendments and additions at the hands of the Patriarchs, swelled into the nobler title of "Orthodox Confession of the Catholic and Apostolic Faith of the Eastern Church." It is needless to remark, that the great majority of a semi-barbarous people is generally undisturbed by the establishment or fluctuation of obscure doctrines, or perhaps entirely ignorant of their existence, unless they are embodied and represented to them in some sacrament or ceremony; but by the few who possessed any learning, and these were to be found only in the higher orders of the priesthood, the above Confession was submissively received; and, we may add, that the doctrine of transubstantiation is most clearly inculcated by it †.

* See Consett, on the Russian Church.—*Pref.*

† It is admitted in the Confession that the Elements, after the

In the meantime, the disputes between Claude and the Sorbonists in France had disturbed the monastic repose of the East, and the emissaries of both parties seem to have penetrated the very recesses of Greece in pursuit of advocates, or at least of signatures. Neither party had any reason to complain of coldness, for doubtless neither failed to make use of that argument which is most intelligible to the poor and the ignorant. But the more disciplined experience and tactics of the Latins prevailed, and when M. de Nointel, the French ambassador, condescended to engage in a personal canvass, his efforts proved irresistible. Twenty "Confessions de Foi des Grecs," attested by above five hundred ecclesiastics, enriched the archives of the Port Royalists, and were published in their famous work, "La Perpétuité de la Foi de l'Eglise Catholique touchant l'Eucharistie." This success afforded them, perhaps, a temporary triumph over adversaries who had not scorned to seek the same victory by the same means; but the historian derives from it little assurance of the doctrines, but much of the ignorance, indifference, or venality of the clergy of Greece.

M. de Nointel followed up his advantage with

substance is changed, retain their former *appearance*; a concession to the sense of sight which appears to have surprised M. Aymon into an opinion that it was a modification of the doctrine.

unwearied diligence; and we cannot doubt that it was his influence which prevailed upon Dositheus, patriarch of Jerusalem, to summon a third synod, for the purpose of finally extinguishing the opinions of Cyril. This synod assembled at Jerusalem in the year 1678; and its proceedings, which are more voluminous than those of the two former councils, may be divided into a general attack upon all Protestants; a particular reprobation of the "Confession," with an idle attempt to shew that it was not the work of Cyril; and an exposition of the orthodox faith, composed by Dositheus. On the first of these subjects it is needless to make any comment, and the second is chiefly curious, in as far as it proves the high respect which continued to prevail throughout the church for the name of Cyril. The assembled prelates were desirous to deprive the Confession of the authority which it possessed as his work; they were anxious to detach the opinions from the high character of him who professed them; the heresy they might despise or abhor, but they both feared and respected the heretic. And thus were they not ashamed to endeavour, on the slightest evidence, to overthrow what fact and probability had alike contributed to establish, and what the public declarations of two synods had avowed without reserve and without suspicion.

After much reprobation of the Confession, and many foolish attempts to exculpate Cyril from the

crime of having composed it, we proceed with great curiosity to the third point, that we may learn the doctrines really constituting that orthodoxy which had been so rudely violated. The Creed of Dositheus is also divided into sixteen "Decrees," following the order of the chapters of Cyril, and in many places even tracing the paragraphs, and adopting the very words of the latter, so that we cannot doubt that our copy of the Confession (published at the Hague) is the same with that which caused so much scandal to the Synod of Jerusalem. And now shall I hesitate to confess that, after an attentive comparison of the two creeds, I am unable to discover more than *three* material points of difference between them? others may lurk there which have escaped me, for my eye is slow to distinguish the evanescent shades, and to trace the minute lines of religious controversy; but no difference more than verbal can I here discern, save as to the number of the sacraments, the real presence, and the state of the dead. The third article of Cyril has subjected him to the charge of Calvinism—let us see the third article of Dositheus:—"We believe that the perfectly good God has from eternity predestined to glory those whom he hath elected, and delivered to punishment those whom he hath rejected, not, however, that he hath thus willed, either to justify those, or to condemn these without a cause." The cause of which Dositheus has been contented to

assert the existence, Cyril has endeavoured to assign, and the praise of superior prudence is certainly due to the former ; but his words express no dissent from the cause assigned, nor would Cyril himself have hesitated for a moment to subscribe to them. The eighth article of Cyril seems to reject the mediation of the Saints. The following are the words of Dositheus :—“ We believe that our Lord Jesus Christ is the *sole* mediator, and that having given himself as a ransom for all, he made a reconciliation by his own blood between God and man, and that he is the watchful (careful) Comforter of those belonging to him, and a propitiation for our sins.” From this decree it is quite clear, that, whatever may be the opinions or the practice of its individual members, the Greek church did not then acknowledge the mediatory power of the Saints, still less did it enjoin their worship. In the three articles (2, 10, and 12,) which regard the wisdom and authority of the church, the principles of the two opponents are the same ; their verbal difference only arises from the greater caution of Dositheus, who leaves to inference the consequence which Cyril boldly asserted*.

But when he arrives at the three points of real difference, the Patriarch of Jerusalem expresses

* The distinction drawn by Cyril in his tenth article, that the Christ of the church on earth should not be called its “ Head,” but its “ leading member,” appears unworthy of him ; it may have been occasioned by some local circumstances, of which we know nothing.

himself with perfect precision ; and when he inculcates the divine origin of the seven mysteries, the actual change of the elements in the Eucharist, and the final sentence of the dead at the day of judgment, we believe him to deliver the opinions of the greater part of his communion, as they were growing into prevalence at that time, and as they are now established*.

We may consider the Synod of Jerusalem as having restored its ancient repose to the church of Greece—at least, the struggles which had so long divided it were not openly renewed. But the animosities thus occasioned, were they so soon forgotten? The passions agitated by religious contention, were they so easily composed and reconciled? But it has ever been the fate and misery of Greece to throw open her consecrated vales and islands, as it were for a sanctuary and everlasting temple to discord. In her hours of glory, she was deeply stained with her own best and noblest blood; in her days of philosophy, she was distracted by clamorous controversy; in her years and centuries of slavery and helplessness, she has been made a bleeding field of action for the crimes of powerful robbers, the object of their fierce ambition, the partner in their misfor-

* We should recollect, however, that the Council of Jerusalem, as well as those of Constantinople and Yassi, were, after all, only local synods, not general councils, and therefore that their decrees are not binding on the "Catholic" church.

tunes and disgrace, the victims of their cruelty and perfidy. Nor was it enough that the seeming death-bed of her *political* existence should be disturbed by unceasing agitation; her religion escaped not from similar interference, and the purity of her faith was disputed at the very moment when she stood most in need of it. The cowed emissaries of Rome thronged round to behold her struggles; they derided the accents of her prayers; they darkened her prospect of salvation; they insulted her feebleness by demanding her spiritual allegiance to a foreign master; and, doubtless, they would have subjected her to inquisitorial tortures, if the government, which had inflicted upon her every other evil, had not preserved her from that*. Presently, the Protestant arrived to rescue her from the shoals to which the other would have conducted her, and to guide her into the harbour of peace. The two adversaries contended, the one for her possession, the other for her friendship; and the clamours of the conflict appear to have awakened in her that sort of irritable animation, which decided her to reject what seemed most pressing in the solicitations of both; for while she disclaimed for ever the authority of the Pope, she repelled with scorn the doctrine of the heretic. The contending parties at length retired; and we must

* The Jesuits are believed to have actually meditated and proposed the introduction of the Inquisition into Turkey.

confess, that the impression produced by their interference, and communicated to the feelings of the people, has been far from favourable to either.

Such, in a few words, was the nature of the movements excited in the east by the Reformation. The church of Greece, though divided by many and angry differences from her rival of Rome, rested for the most part on the same foundations; in veneration for antiquity and horror of innovation and heresy, she even exceeded and surpassed her; and, therefore, though she might rejoice in her humiliation, she could have no sympathy with those who had occasioned it. It is in religious as in political despotisms; the spirit of reason and independence is viewed with suspicion, even when it disturbs the bosom of a rival. The Eastern Church, sovereign unrestrained over the conscience of her own subjects, was interested to maintain the legitimacy of the same description of sovereignty to Rome; and, therefore, she condemned the *revolt* of the reformers on principles common to both churches, and will be slow to acknowledge their spiritual independence.

For this general as well as many particular reasons, we need not be surprised that the opinions of the Protestants have made no progress in the East. And if we should wish to ascertain the precise limits of the success of Rome in the same field, where she was encamped for so many centuries, we

should find that her exertions have been directed at various periods (sometimes even at the same period) to three objects:—

1. To establish the supremacy of the Pope over the Patriarch, and secure his universal acknowledgment as head of the Greek church.
2. To divide the members of the church, and bring over as many subjects as possible from the Patriarch to the Pope.
3. To latinize the doctrines of the East.

The first and principal object, as it involved the entire conquest of the church, could not otherwise have been permanently accomplished than by the submission of all the *four* Patriarchs, enforced by the public act of a general council; and if this was difficult to effect under the feeble sway of the latest emperors, it became impossible under the jealous dominion of the Turk: for it would have been absurd to imagine that the Sultan would permit any stranger to regulate the religious duties of his own slaves in his own capital. It would appear then, that after the taking of Constantinople*, the

* Leonardus Chiensis thus addressed the Pope on the severest evil which Christianity ever sustained: "Heu quæ spes in populo duro, qui tot annis sine vita spirituali abscissus a capite manebat! Quomodo non desperati, quomodo non abjecti a Deo! Qui ab ecclesia elongati Romana in cordis duritie permanserunt! &c." I

aspirations of Rome were limited to the second object, and here they were not entirely without success. I do not indeed feel quite assured, that the latinized societies resident in Greece absolutely disclaimed their Patriarch and looked to Rome alone for guidance; nor do I believe that the latinized Patriarchs paid more than nominal homage to the Vatican. But it is quite certain that this last succeeded to a certain extent in introducing dissension among the Greeks. The third object (to corrupt the doctrines of Greece) was of course pursued in common with the other two, with an ardour accommodated to circumstances, and which seemed to increase as the points which were thought most material became less attainable; and we have already observed to what precise extent it was accomplished. And thus the permanent and visible results of this long and various contest may be reduced to these: the final independence of the Greek church; the apostacy of a small proportion of its members to the communion of Rome; the adoption of the doctrine of transubstantiation in the place of the loose and uncertain notions which had before prevailed on that subject*.

quote this from a little book containing a great deal of truth, called "The Establishment of the Turks in Europe."

* If it should seem singular that the Pope succeeded in establishing transubstantiation in the church of Greece, while he entirely failed in introducing the belief in purgatory, perhaps the following reasons will account for that fact:—1. He set much

more value on the former point, and pressed it more strongly, as being the most distinguishing badge of his own church. 2. Some vague expressions in the ancient Greek fathers so aided the delusion as to make it appear rather like the exaggeration and extension of an old opinion than the imposition of a new one. 3. It was an opinion purely speculative, nothing affecting men's happiness or misery in any state of existence, their hopes or their conduct. While the story of purgatory is so much more practical as to create greater hesitation in assent, and thus to require stronger evidence of its credibility.

END OF PART II.

PART III.

THE STROPHADES.

I publish these Letters at the importunity of the very learned friend to whom they are most unworthily addressed, and have, therefore, only to pray (in the true spirit of friendship!) that the censure due to their levity may be directed to his partiality. They have no claim whatsoever on general attention, except that they were written on the island of our very old acquaintances the Harpies, by the only traveller who had then, or, as far as I know, has ever, indulged the boyish curiosity to visit them.

*“ Convent of the Strophades,
May, 1820.*

“ MY DEAR T.

“ IF there be half so much pleasure in receiving letters as there is vanity in dating them from places which none ever saw, and few ever heard of, you will thank me for addressing you from the unexplored Strophades; and, indeed, is it not a just and natural pride which I feel in treading these islands, of which no one knows any thing more than that they are ‘*Insulæ Ionio in magno,*’ though every one is familiar with the story which gives them celebrity? Such at least was the extent of my own knowledge until the other day, when, accidentally turning over a Meletius at Corfu, I found that they were situated only thirty-five miles south of Zante; and that, even as lately as the days of that geographer, they were still suspected of harbouring a race of monstrous birds, not, indeed, precisely answering the description of Virgil, but such as might be believed the degenerate descendants of Celæno, and as like the Harpies of ancient days as a Greek of Mistra is like a Greek of Sparta*. My curiosity thus received an additional impulse, and

* These letters were written while I was on my way to the East, *before the Revolution.*

as all travellers are interested in maintaining each other's credit, I was willing to encounter some risk even in support of the veracity of Æneas. For this, you know, is the land of credulity as well as imagination; and the tales which you in England call fables, are with us, under this soft blue heaven, matters of fervid and blissful certainty.

“ Well; from Corfu I sailed to Zante, and at Zante I embarked with my servant in an open boat at about ten last night. At day break we had passed the southern extremity of that island, but the sun, which, as it rose from behind the Morea, defined the majestic outlines of Olenus and Erymanth, did not yet disclose to us the object of our search. Four other hours of tedious progress and expectation were required before we descried the humble Strophades emerging from the sea mist. The Maestrale carried us nearly to the entrance of the little port—‘*vela cadunt, remis insurgimus*’—and at midday our anchor was cast under the shelter of a rock crowned with an old and extensive building. The Greek flag had been hoisted on the first appearance of the bark, and on our arrival some monks presented themselves on the beach. After a short explanation, occasioned by the novelty of such a visit, I was permitted to land, and conducted with great civility to the convent.

“ The convent is situated on the north side of the larger island, and I think on the highest spot in it ;

my cell is extremely neat and clean, and, for a monastery, spacious; the window looks to the north-west, the direction in which I always look with most pleasure; thus, too, it admits the cool Maestrale, which, at this season, usually rises at about eleven every morning, and continues to refresh the East until evening. Zante and the north-west coast of the Morea are before my eyes, and I do begin at last to feel myself *in Greece*. At Corcyra, Leucadia, Ithaca, Zacynthos, the beating of drums and the flashing of bayonets, under a cloudless sky, and among Oriental scenery and costumes, confuses our associations and feelings; and in the doubt whether most to love what Greece was or what England is, patriotism will sometimes triumph over memory and imagination; but here have I full liberty to sigh over the languid features of mortality, undisturbed by any living spectacle of wealth and power. The Strophades are, indeed, also under English protection; but there is no garrison here, and, what is more singular, no Englishman has hitherto ever set foot on the islands. Most of the land belongs to a nobleman of Zante, by whom it is let to the monks, who are forty in number, and the *only* inhabitants.

“Of these two islands, the smaller is a mere rock; remarkable only for the vast masses of stone which the storms have rolled upon it, and the quantity of very white salt, filling the basons or chasms thus

formed. It lies to the northward, and by thus presenting its hoary front to the tempests, it seems to secure the peace and fertility of its happier neighbour. This last is about six miles in circumference, covered in almost every part with luxuriant verdure. A certain space in the centre is cultivated with corn, and produces sufficient to satisfy the wants of its cultivators. I observe some small vineyards; sheep and goats are in abundance, and the 'lata boum passim campis armenta' still continue to tempt the voracity of strangers, and to justify the description of *Ægeas*. But one point there is, affecting the topographical fidelity either of the son of Anchises, or of his accomplished poet, which I may not pass over unnoticed. His description leads us to expect high and mountainous land, 'aperire procul montes—de montibus adsunt Harpyiæ.' Alas! the low rock on which the convent stands, and which, at ten or twelve miles distance, is scarcely visible at sea, ill deserves the dignified appellation; and the island descends from the north almost to the level of the sea on the south, so much so, that to ships approaching at night, or in mist, from that quarter, there is no small danger of being stranded. I believe, indeed, that the *Strophades* are the lowest islands of Greece, whether in the Ionian or the *Ægean* Sea.

And certainly we sail more safely, as well as more agreeably, over these enchanted waters, when we in-

trust ourselves to the conduct of Homer, rather than to that of his less accurate imitator. Even already I have had opportunities of observing that Homeric epithets are not only faithfully true, but peculiarly characteristic—thus, for instance: *ἰλιέσσα Ζάκυνθος* (which Virgil has had the good fortune to translate) denotes the very circumstance which distinguishes Zante from its neighbour Cephalonia. Again, in Ithaca, *Νηρίτου ἄρος . . . τανύφυλλον*, has a much more appropriate beauty than Virgil's *Neritos ardua Saxia*; because, even to this moment, the mountain which we have the best reason to believe Neritos, though certainly far from luxuriant, is still marked by much more pretension to verdure, than any of those about it. Indeed, the present appearance of the islands of Greece is probably not very different, even in such respects, from that which was presented to the eye of Homer; they are in general well inhabited, and therefore well cultivated; and as in most of them nature, by the intermixture of impracticable rock, has imperiously decided the limits of human labour, it is not possible that the interrupted industry even of many centuries should have wrought in them any material change. And this is one great cause of the higher curiosity and pleasure with which we examine and contemplate the insular scenery of the East.

“An afternoon of solitude was delightfully spent in exploring the secrets of the island; for it is a

feeling of rare and exquisite satisfaction with which the traveller approaches some consecrated spot—the object of his boyish dreams, or of the more serious triflings of his maturity, which has hitherto lain hid from modern observation, and presents itself, as antiquity has left it, unexplored by our enthusiasm, and uncelebrated by our vanity. It may be a very trifling object that he is in search of, and a very useless discovery that bounds his expectations; yet the hand which raises the veil cannot fail to tremble with something of that generous hope which admits not of disappointment. Some fragments of ancient days may be concealed in the shades which lie before him; some broken statue, or sculptured column, representing the features and the genius of the men of other times—a sepulchre or an urn, the record of their piety. Alas, by no record of piety or of genius, by no fragment of art, however rude or disfigured, was my curious toil rewarded; nor any vestige of antiquity did I discover, nor any other recompense did I meet with, except the sight of those imperishable charms which nature is generally ready to display to those who love them, and which on this spot she may hitherto have lavished in vain.

“ The corn-fields in the centre are surrounded by deep and fragrant groves and shrubberies of mastic and myrtle, extending in most parts quite down to the sea-shore, and forming a green girdle

which almost encompasses the island ; some undulations in the ground add to beauty, variety and appearance of extent ; and one of the valleys thus formed is adorned by a thick and extensive grove of laurel. These recesses are not unvisited by song, and at this season are chiefly animated by the voice of the dove, now on her passage to the northward. Other interruption there is none, save this and the distant dashing of the sea-waves, to the silence every where prevailing, and inducing serious feelings and recollections of other ages."

" The convent is well built and in good repair, and the interior is remarkably clean, so as to be free from the various annoyances usual in oriental habitations ; and the monks present, both in appearance and manner, a singular contrast to the inmates of the wealthier monasteries of the south of Italy and Sicily. I am inclined to think that the difference is not merely external ; and with little general faith in monastic excellence, I feel strongly persuaded that the holy persons here surrounding me are not only free from the ordinary vices of humanity, but also that they live in the possession of many good principles, and in the exercise of many feelings not common to the mass of their

countrymen*. And this is the best effect that can possibly result from seclusion from the world ; and if it become less improbable as the seclusion is more perfect, there can be no place where we may look for it with greater certainty than in this. For no human being inhabits, and very few approach, this island except its religious occupants, who thus have little other communication with their fellow creatures than by an occasional visit of one or two of the members to Zante. There is another point of monastic discipline which they observe as rigidly as the brotherhood of Mount Athos are said to do, and much more so than is usual in smaller establishments ; for in most other convents, however desolate and apart from human conversation, on mountain tops, or among savage forests, one or more of the female sex are generally to be found engaged in menial offices, or associated in religious duties ; but on this island there is no record that the foot of woman hath ever been placed. Again, as there is here no police or health establishment, there can be no direct intercourse with the continent of Greece ; and passing vessels are much more anxious to avoid

* There is nothing improbable in the supposition, that in Greece the least corrupted part of the population may be the monks, and that the virtue which oppression has contributed to expel from the higher classes may have found some sort of refuge among them ; for the policy of the Turks has always protected them more, or rather persecuted them less, than the other orders of the community.

the danger of the low coast, than to seek shelter in the insecure harbour of the Strophades. Thus, it would be difficult to imagine a community more nearly severed from the world than this; they possess all their resources within themselves; their own island supplies them with corn, vegetables, and excellent water; what little of wine or oil they may require is obtained from Zante, whither their cattle is carried to pay their rent (for on no occasion, as they assure me, do they ever touch meat); and a slight addition to their revenue is made by the sale of turtle-doves, which resort hither in vast numbers during the two seasons of their passage, and are shot or taken by the monks; these also they send, in vinegar, to Zante; and this is the extent of their intercourse with man.

“So circumstanced, I am not surprised to find them ignorant and credulous, and that they are not still more so, is owing to that keen native curiosity and shrewdness which belongs to them as Greeks. Just now I shewed them a map, the first that they had ever beheld, and pointed out to them, as they crowded about me, the little spot where we were conversing—*αὐτὸς ὁ τόπος...αὐτὸς ὁ τόπος*, was pronounced with an universal eagerness and enthusiasm, indicating more patriotism than I could have believed them to possess; but this, again, was Grecian: for there is scarcely a rock, mountain, or islet, in this singular country, however

wild or unattractive, in which its inhabitant does not find some peculiar charm, the cause of a vague partiality so exclusive, so limited, so merely local, that he will often indulge it to the contempt or hatred of those who dwell on the adjoining rock. And, besides, there is no just reason for surprise that some sort of attachment to their residence should be found to exist even in monastic bosoms; for this is the home to which their passions, and all their earthly hopes, are confined; where their virtues can alone be exercised, and where the prayers, which are continually offered, must sometimes be offered with earnestness and devotion.

“The office of Papa, or Hegoumenos, which lasts two years, is now held by a most venerable old monk, whose long white beard flows amply over his purple vest. Even a more striking object, both in figure and character, is a Father more than ninety years of age, who retains all the fire and curiosity of youth, and displays it in the most particular inquiries respecting my travels, my pursuits, my studies, my habits, and those of my country. The most enlightened among my venerable friends is a native of the Morea, who several years ago presented his fortune (about two thousand dollars) to the convent, and came to spend the rest of his life within its walls. These men are Greeks and monks; but, if there be any faith in

the expression of voice or countenance—if simplicity of manner be any promise of purity of mind—if ignorance of the business and pleasures of the world give any security against the contamination of its vices—they possess a piety, benevolence, and sinless disposition to virtue, which would not disgrace a purer form of Christianity. I believe the same to be true of many others of the community, but on these three I have had the best means of observing.

“ I am treated with great attention by the leading persons, and with perfect civility by all. Early this morning I received an invitation to breakfast with the Hegoumenos, in the garden of the convent. On my appearance at the gate, I was much astonished to be honoured by a salute of some pieces of cannon (they are kept here for defence against piratical or other aggression); the holy flag, decorated with the figures of Christ, the Madonna, and St. John, was waving in the garden, and some of the Elders, in their most decent apparel, advanced to receive me. I was conducted into a beautiful arbour of myrtles, ornamented with lilies and other flowers; our table was a round mass of stone, so perforated as to leave space for a myrtle to grow up through the centre, and inter-

o

pose among the guests its delicate leaves. Around the harbour were orange and lemon-trees,—

*Τέων εὐπνοὶ καρπὸς ἀπέλλοται, ἀλλὰ μάλ' αἰὶ
Ζεφυρὴν κρύοντα, εὐὰ μὲν φύει, ἔλλα δὲ κτίσσει—*

the fruit, indeed, had every tint, from the deepest green to the yellowness of maturity ; and the blowing zephyr was rewarded for its toil by the odours which it carried off from branches, where the flower was blooming by the side of the fragrant fruit.

“ The usual fare was abundantly provided, with the addition of tea, of which my hosts partook fearfully and, as is usual in the East, medicinally, in the belief that sudden enervation would succeed the slightest intemperance in that respect ; in other matters we all did justice to our fare, and to the hospitable branches which enbowered us. I retired from the garden with the same honours which attended my entrance, and once more sought the shade and solitude of the laurel grove.

“ This is, indeed, a very beautiful little island. I never beheld a spot so favourable to Pan, and the Naiads, and the Nereids, *ποντίας ἀκτῆς ἔπι*. Here are tangled branches and flowering turf almost to the ocean's edge, and here are shades and shelter, and caves and myrtles, and

silence and secrecy,—all that recommends the valleys of Arcadia, except “the *breathing* roses and the wood.” Indeed this place does appertain more properly to Arcadia (from whose shores it is not forty miles distant) than to the barren Ionian sea; and, in wandering among its pastoral recesses, or emerging from its thickets into some open green spot beset by fragrant shrubs, you would expect to see the Ladon winding at your feet between its ‘liliated banks,’ or ‘old Lycæus or Cyllene hoar’ shaking his shaggy head above you—were it not that the ceaseless beating of the billows, everywhere audible, for ever reminds you under which sceptre you are living. And yet there exists a traditionary circumstance, by which it would seem that nature has intended a perpetual union between the Strophades and the Continent; for the monks inform me of faithful records to prove that the Alpheus has frequently presented himself at a well in this island, and deposited there shrubs, flowers, roots, or leaves, which had been confided to him in Elis. The monks, who are certainly not very credulous, except where their superstitions are concerned, are bold enough to disbelieve this story; but to me it seems nothing improbable, that in his subteraqueous journey to visit his Arethusa, the old river god should pause at this delightful resting-place, and here resign some portion of the tribute intended for his Syracusan mistress.

“But none of these pious brethren were aware of the classical importance of their island, nor had any clear tradition reached them respecting its ancient inhabitants, or the irruption of the Son of Venus. I had the pleasure of relating to them the fable on the scene of its action, and they received the communication with mute and sceptical astonishment. The story, however, spread with great rapidity; and presently several took the field, with guns and other weapons, against some large sea-birds which frequent the coast; two were brought in, of unusual form and dimensions, to the larger of which, measuring nearly four feet from bill to tail, they chose to apply the name of *νυκτοκοράκα*, or owl. Owls are, in fact, exceedingly abundant in the island, and enjoy, in its woody recesses, the most undisturbed repose; but, in the bird in question, I could not discover, on the most curious examination, the slightest resemblance either to *Nyctimene* or *Celæno*. The other they called *πλάκα*, a name more generally applied to the common sea-bird, *λάρος*; but this, in the *Strophades*, is named *αετίνα*. But none of them, howsoever named, can be suspected of any affinity to the harpies of *Æneas*.

“This disappointment demanded the kind of consolation which immediately followed and allayed it. The *νυκτοκοράκα* was replaced on my table by a lamb, fed only on milk, which had fallen for my

dinner, and was dressed entire, in the ancient fashion; and which I assaulted, fearless now of any interruption from the obscenæ volucres, whether by foul and filthy contact, or by the 'vox tetrum dira inter odorem.'

“ Presently I received a visit from my white-bearded friends, bearing liqueurs and other luxuries; and I then learnt, with much astonishment, that while I was unconsciously wandering in the groves, immediately after high mass, a regular Litania had been performed by the Hegoumenos and the whole community, in full dress, for the health and success of myself and the happiness of my family. I believe them to have been perfectly disinterested in this attention, meaning only to confer the highest honour in their power (and it was the highest possible honour) on the first Englishman who had visited their island. I was pleased and affected by it; and am confirmed, by this and all else that I have here observed, in the opinion that the members of the Greek Church have no violent prejudices against our heresy, nor will form any, as long as we treat their religious ceremonies with respect; and that this respect is most industriously paid, even to their most absurd superstitions, by our soldiers and officers of every rank, I am most happy, on repeated observation, to attest.

“ The north-west wind subsided towards even-

ing, and the sun calmly descended into the smooth and burnished sea. Slowly receding from the water, the tints of evening spread themselves over the sky, and varied and brightened as they spread. On the one hand, the dark outlines of Zante were extended along the painted horizon. On the other, lay the shores of ancient Pylos, overhung by the summits of the Messenian mountains, still shining with the last glance of day. The clouds, which in fine summer weather collect in white folds above the continent of Greece, and brood peacefully over it, had either vanished with the sun, or caught the momentary colours of the west; and the veil of misty light, which is thrown during the glare of day over the distant coast, softening its outlines, but confusing its features, had already melted away and disclosed the naked prospect of its magnificence. While the whole ocean, and earth, and heaven, were overspread by that air of pensive tranquillity which is peculiar to the features of Greece, which is inspired by her dignity and her sorrows, which mitigates the severity of her beauty, and by which her most enchanting expression is ever most divinely animated.

“ Two severe shocks of earthquake disturbed, at a very early hour, the light slumbers of my abstemious friends, and threw the convent into some confusion; for such events are less usual here than at Zante or Santa Maura: but presently morning rose with its accustomed splendour, and disclosed a new object of terror somewhat more lasting than the other. This was the spectacle of a Turkish fleet, becalmed near the eastern coast: there was some apprehension of a friendly visit from its irregular crews, and the name of the tutelar saint, Dionysius, was again invoked with frequent earnestness, until a light breeze sprang up from the south, and carried them a few miles forward, on their way to suppress the rebellion of Ali Pasha. Rescued from this second peril, and now hopeless of any more interesting discoveries, I allowed myself to be conducted about by the monks, in order to see what they consider the real curiosities of the island; and I will so far compliment their vanity, at the expense of your patience, as to enumerate them to you.

“ First in honour and sanctity, is the Fountain of St. Dionysius, the living and perennial proof of his miraculous powers. Its fresh and wholesome waters ooze from the rocks at about fifty yards from the sea, and preserve their purity almost on the brink of the briny element. This has been

attributed to supernatural intervention, and the belief is embraced with a credulity not universal even in Greece; for there is a fountain at Polis, in Ithaca, welling as purely from the sands, within five yards of the water's edge, which I could never learn to be consecrated by any legend*.

“2.—The well of the Alpheus derives little respect from the profane fable which dignifies its origin; but as it is the only object in the island connected with any story of classical antiquity, it excited just interest enough in me to make me sorry to find it so extremely like any other well.

“3.—The chapel of St. John is indeed a horrible curiosity. It is the charnel-house, where all the bones of the deceased are deposited. For three years they are allowed to repose in their place of sepulture; at the end of that period they are disinterred, and dismembered, and brought into this, their final receptacle; and here are they carefully piled up, wretched fragments of mortality! the legs and arms on one side, and the grinning skulls on the other, while a lamp is left to glimmer, as if in mockery upon them. I am at a loss to assign any motive for this disgusting custom.

* I should now remark, that the Ithakesians, among whom I passed some weeks, appear to me to have more classical and fewer religious traditions, than any people in Greece.

The Turks plant flowers where the bodies are placed, and oppress the earth by no marble, that at the day of judgment they may spring upward without impediment. The thirsty Nubian or Arab of the desert places a jar of water at the head of his departed friend, lest the great want which has tormented him in this world, should pursue him into the next. Others are diligent in preserving the limbs from corruption, and the features from change: and there are some (as the Capucines in the Latomia at Syracuse) who endeavour to throw the very air and expression of life into the senseless remains of the departed, by placing them erect in their usual dress, or their favourite attitude—nay, they do not hesitate to crown their heads with myrtle, and adorn them as if for the dance or the festival; yet, for all these varieties of superstition, we may discover some pardonable motive in the piety or in the weakness of humanity: but to tear the bodies from the earth, and arrange in promiscuous heaps the disjointed members, is to anticipate and surpass the ravages of time and corruption.

“4.—They shew the Cave of St. Dionysius, which was the favourite scene of his devotions, and is thus invested with peculiar sanctity. When the Turks, in a war with the Venetians, landed on this island, the monks carried hither the bones and treasures of the Saint, piously consigning both himself and his

property to his own protection. The Turks were not curious to explore the recesses of the island; so, to save trouble, they collected several of the monks, and having stripped them, proceeded so diligently in the application of the nabboot, that the secret of the Saint was soon betrayed, and the wealth and the relics delivered up to the Infidel. Both were carried away, and with them eighteen monks, the companions of the bondage of their Saint. However, both monks and relics were soon afterwards redeemed by a pious bishop, who prudently placed the latter under protection of the temporal power residing at Zante, where they still remain.

“5.—The Cave of the Madonna was plundered by the same hands which violated that of Dionysius: some relics were also carried away in this case, but I am unable to learn their precise nature, nor can I find that they were ever recovered. But it is certain that many cruel scenes took place, and that some blood was shed, of which the *eternal* stain is shewn on one of the convent walls.

“6.—The Cenotaph of the Saint completes the list of holy things; it is a monument of stone, neatly cut, and adorned with a modern inscription, which was engraved, and probably composed, at Constantinople, and it is thus very little in unison either with his fountain or his cave, or with any

other object in this rude and artless island. There is a tradition of magnificent gardens formerly flourishing on the northern coast, which have been washed away by the tempests, and an old sepulchre was lately found there, in an abrupt bank of difficult access, which may possibly contain others.

“ Thus you see, among the sacred things of this untravelled spot, how large a proportion still are *caves* and *fountains*. You see how little the spirit of its sanctity has been affected by the change of its religion—how little it ceased to be Grecian, when it became Christian. These people seem as if they could not live except in the actual presence of immortals; they are not satisfied by their distant protection—they will have them down on earth to dwell with them. And so it has happened that the same fire and restlessness of imagination, which lent beauty and variety to paganism, which created, indeed, its very substance and essence, has turned itself to the false adornment of Christianity, suspending its fantastic decorations over the altar of God, and spoiling the simplicity of true religion by its vain and incongruous devices.”

I recollect that these meditations were interrupted by the voice of my pilot, urgently pressing my immediate embarkation. I followed most reluctantly, for I was leaving for ever a place which had not yet lost its charms on me. And having engraven on the walls of my cell a sincere testimonial of gratitude to my hospitable friends, I was attended by them in long procession down to the beach, where I received their parting salutations, and entered my little skiff, under a salute from their whole battery. But not thus was I allowed to depart, nor were my Grecian hosts on this occasion unmindful of their own honour, or the manners of their forefathers. A young kid, perfectly white, without spot or blemish, was the ξάϊνον which I found waiting for me on board, and which I turned loose the following morning upon the Zantiote hills.

NOTE on p. 114.

It has occurred to me that I may have expressed myself too generally, or at least too vaguely, in the passage referred to; and as it is much easier to prevent misunderstanding than to correct it, I will here endeavour to explain my meaning somewhat more precisely.

I intend to say, that the doctrinal errors of the Romish church are *in themselves* innocent of the abuses which have flowed from them; that their evil consequences were neither necessary nor inseparably attached to them; in short, that a man might retain a speculative belief in transubstantiation, or even in purgatory, without being thereby a worse member of society. But here is the distinction: it is the *church* that has associated its tenets with practical evil—it is the priesthood that has converted them into instruments of its own aggrandizement, (an object which is easily effected as soon as a people shall be persuaded to transfer their devotion from God to any created thing;) and as the real doctrines of Christianity did not furnish materials which could be turned to this purpose, there was no resource, except to substitute, or superadd others of a more tractable nature. But, separate these inventions from the practices which did not necessarily grow, but were deliberately built upon them, and it would be absurd to say, that the mere cold belief in them is inconsistent with the discharge of every social duty.

I have no intention here, to enter into any general inquiry how far men's habits and character may be affected by peculiar religious opinions, or to dispute that in many cases they may and must be so; the history of our religion abounds with instances of gross absurdities and flagrant crimes committed through mistaken views of the doctrines and spirit of the Gospel. And even in these days, the doctrine of Election (as it is vulgarly understood) is, in its essence, dangerous; but its operation is probably restrained in the individual conscience of those who profess it by some lurking influence of reason and common sense; and its general consequences are obviated by the very constitution of civilised society. On the other hand, that imperfect faith which admits the holiness of the Gospel law, but disparages the person of the lawgiver, can give no cause of apprehension or distrust to society, though it be certainly inconsistent with the grateful zeal and ardent affection of piety which animates the worshipper of Christ. And thus our remarks will only terminate in the acknowledged truth, that doctrinal errors, though they never can be matters of indifference, should never give occasion to personal animosity; and that they should not be made subjects of quarrel or jealous controversy, unless their avowed and necessary consequences be in opposition to the general spirit of Christianity. That they can *never* be matters of indifference is perfectly clear for many reasons, some of which are these: that falsehood is ever a faithless and insidious attendant on truth, dishonouring that by whose name and protection only she lives and flourishes; that the irrational conclusions which some Christians derive from the misinterpretation of Scripture are ever eagerly seized by the adversaries of our faith, as matters of argument or sarcasm against religion itself; and chiefly that Scripture instructs us to believe that the right understanding of God's

word is not immaterial to our future condition. It is true that there is no part of our Saviour's history which we ought to place more frequently before our memory, than his conduct to the Samaritans; none from which we learn a nobler or more heavenly lesson; yet may we not so read it as to suppose, that error is exalted and sanctified, because it is pitied and pardoned; or to forget the distinction which He draws when he says, "Ye worship ye know not what; we know what we worship; for salvation is of the Jews."

THE END.

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